

FINAL REPORT

OF THE

PUBLIC SAFETY STAFFING REVIEW COMMITTEE

SUBMITTED TO

THE LEXINGTON BOARD OF SELECTMEN

September 6th, 2004

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Professor Emeritus, Criminal Justice
Committee Chair

Acknowledgments

The Committee gratefully acknowledges the Selectmen's concerns about the status of Public Safety in Lexington, which led to its appointment. It also extends its thanks to Leo McSweeney, who, as Chairman of the BOS, served as liaison until March 29, 2004. After that date, Leo continued to serve as a faithful member of the Committee. Great appreciation also goes to Selectman Richard Pagett for his considerable assistance and sage advice. He began his services as BOS liaison from March 29th, 2004 to the present.

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Finally, the Committee expresses its appreciation to Selectmen Dawn McKenna and William Kennedy for meeting with the Chair and Vice Chair on matters related to the Committee's research and findings. It also thanks William Lahey, Town Counsel for his advice.

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PRIORITIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Vision Statement

- The main purpose of public safety is to save lives and property.
- Maintain adequate levels of public safety for Lexington by reinstating into the base budget what has already been approved for FY 2005.
- It is respectfully recommend that the Board of Selectmen emphasize leadership through action to provide citizens with adequate dispatch, police, and firefighters and equipment to protect not only Lexington's citizens but public safety personnel.

Fiscal Year 2005: Actions Recommended but not funded

- The consideration of public safety needs should be an integral part of all budget deliberations.
- Any proposals concerning public safety should include a full consideration of **intended and unintended consequences**.
- Initiate professional staffing, employment, and equipment studies of the Lexington Police Department and the Lexington Fire Department.
- Create a permanent Advisory Committee on Public Safety to advise the BOS, Town officials, and the public of all matters related to Town fire safety, police, and dispatch protection on an ongoing basis. Committee membership should include at least one bona fide expert each on fire science and law enforcement.
- Begin team and morale building at the LPD
- Bring Dispatch staffing to 2-2-2 levels. (This staffing pattern would do much to avoid double shifts). Enhance existing 911 software. Increase Dispatch training, supervision, and access to technology. Fix up the 911 physical environment.
- Place 2002 LPD and LFD budgets into the baseline budget and thereby out of overrides.
- Remove toxic leakage at LFD Headquarters without delay.
- Hire a full time Administrative Assistance/clerk for the Fire Chief.
- Increase training for LPD and LFD.

- Restore Desk Officers (ideally 5 positions but at least for B and C shifts).
- Restore the Traffic Clerk at the LPD and bike patrols.
- Acquire 8 radios for the LPD (to assure one radio for each officer) and assure functional laptops for LPD cruisers.
- Provide unimpeded access to an equipped exercise room for the LPD.
- Begin an updating process of technology and compliance with standards for police (national accreditation), and fire (NFPA standards).
- Budget dollars to build up resources for the replacement of 911 Emergency Technology. Prepare a Request for Proposals to replace 911 Dispatch Technology. Begin with a review of the needs of long-term technology. Emphasis should be on the **interoperability** of all dispatch/police/fire communications equipment.

Fiscal Year 2006: Actions Recommended

- Replace 911 Dispatch technology for both fire and police dispatch.
- Hire a Fire Prevention Officer and a Fire Training Officer
- Pursue a LFD compliance review with NFPA 1710 standards.
- Continue team/morale building for LPD and LFD.
- Implement full internet access for LFD/LPD.
- Implement a LPD traffic patrol for Selective Law Enforcement, continue accreditation process.
- Increase training for LFD and LPD.
- Initiate professional studies of LPD and LFD.
- Hire a second Parking Enforcement Officer (PEO).
- Full implementation of community policing.
- Restore the Middle School Officer (SRO).

Fiscal Year 2007: Actions Recommended

- Build and fully staff a Third Fire Station. This would relieve wear and tear on current equipment and provide service to Marrett Road, Spring Street, Concord Ave., Routes 2 and 128, and give the Town an additional ALS Unit.
- Full LFD compliance with NFPA 1710 and 1500 Standards.
- Broaden ALS service beyond Lexington
- Implement a LFD Community Outreach Program
- New, combined, fully staffed LPD and LFD Headquarters, with a minimum of 14 FT LFD staff per shift, full ALS status, and a fully staffed and accredited LPD.
- More LPD and LFD training.
- More Detectives (7 days per week for B and C shifts).

Nancy Adler (Lexington Town Meeting Member)
Michael Barry (representing the Lexington Police Department)
Cleveland Coats (member of the Massachusetts State Police)
Edith Flynn, Ph.D.(Professor Emeritus, Criminal Justice, Northeastern University)
Paul Keane (Businessman, Lexington Resident)
Leo P. McSweeney (Chairman of the Board of Selectmen and
Committee liaison until March 28, 2004, thereafter
Committee member)
Richard Pagett, (Selectman liaison from March 29, 2004 to the present)
George A. Robinson (representing the Lexington Fire Department)
Barry Sampson (Lexington Town Meeting Member)
Joanne Schnare (Office Manager, Lexington Resident)

Organizational, Procedural, and Methodological Issues

Committee meetings were posted and public. Town Manager Richard White appointed Kerry Evans, Intern, to represent his office. Police Chief C. Casey appointed Lt. Mark Corr to represent his office.

The Committee elected Edith Flynn as Chair, who also served as secretary. Joanne Schnare was elected Vice Chair. To avoid any possible appearance of a conflict of interest, it was decided that Committee members George A. Robinson of the Lexington Fire Department (LFD) and Mike Barry of the Lexington Police Department (LPD) would not vote on any Committee decisions. Even though discussions ranged far and wide and reflected a wide disparity of opinions, the Committee was able to operate on a consensus basis until its final meeting on September 1st, 2004. At the end of that meeting, a vote was taken. Under the Committee's established procedures (with eight members having a vote), six were in favor, one voted against, and one abstained.¹ Although not voting to avoid any appearance of conflict of interest, the two Committee members who represented the Lexington Police Department and Lexington's Fire Department, are in complete agreement with this report.

At its first meeting, the Committee was informed by Leo McSweeney that the June 2003 failed override had caused severe cuts in public safety, among other areas. It was the task of the Committee to assess the effects of those cuts on the ability of both Departments to serve the community and to maintain public safety. Since the Town was in the process of reviewing its Fiscal Year 2005 budget, the Board of Selectmen hoped for an interim verbal report from the Committee for a scheduled March 29th Town Meeting.

In a nutshell, the LPD had lost 15 positions. Twelve Patrol Officers were laid off, one Officer was reassigned to the School Department, while two Officers transferred to the Framingham MA Police Department. Also lost were the Cadet Program and one Dispatcher. The LFD had to close the East Lexington Fire Station and lost its chief and one firefighter due to early retirement. It also lost its only administrative assistant due to fiscal cutbacks. These losses necessitated the Committee to carefully examine the various work functions of both Departments in view of the fact that they were serving many functions not readily visible or clearly understood by the public. Given the urgency of the situation and magnitude of the charge, the Committee decided that the Public Works Department, although very important to public safety, would not be part of the Committee's deliberations.

The Committee perceived a critical need to be of assistance to the Town on matters of public safety and to work as quickly as possible. In order to be able to provide at least some input into the ongoing FY 2005 budget deliberations, the Committee met weekly (and often biweekly) to collect, develop and analyze as much information as possible. The rapid pace of work enabled the Committee to present brief interim findings

¹ On Sunday, September 05, 2004, Committee Vice Chair Joanne Schnare received a telephone call from one member of the Committee requesting his name be removed from this Report.

at a Joint Budget Summit of the Board of Selectmen, Capital Expenditures Committee, Appropriation Committee and the School Committee on February 25, 2004. Subsequently, a second, more detailed interim report was presented to the Board of Selectmen at a meeting on April 12, 2004. That report identified urgent needs in the Fire and the Police Departments, as well as in the Combined Dispatch Office.

Committee *methodology* included: (1) collection of existing data from the Town and both Departments; (2) extensive interviews with key stake holders; (3) site visits; (4) comparative research; (5) the development, administration, collation and analysis of two comprehensive surveys of the Lexington Fire and Police Departments; (6) direct observation of police, fire, and dispatch activities by Committee members; and (7) community outreach by means of a public survey published by the Lexington Minuteman.

The Committee's Mandate: Clarification and Modification

The Committee recognizes that its very creation shows that Lexington's leadership cares about the effects the failed 2003 override imposed on both Departments. However, the mandate, as written, does not reflect the fact that police and fire protection are highly complex activities that touch upon almost every phase of community life. Today, both police and fire science are highly evolved fields. Knowledge in these areas requires years of study at a combination of institutions of higher learning and training academies. Given that, it must be recognized that a proper assessment of the effectiveness of police and fire (including any possible redeployments) as mandated by the Selectmen, cannot be accomplished without a labor intensive, multi-months, detailed study of direct observation and monitoring by persons cognizant of police and fire science.

For each Department, such a study would, at a minimum, require attending roll-calls for every shift, assessing show-up rates, investigating each absence, looking at directed versus self-initiated activities by all Department members, examining all administrative activities, leadership, overtime, division of labor, and deployment over a period of time. Further, standards (to the degree they exist), regulations, operational procedures, and daily activity reports would have to be examined. There would need to be direct observation of field operations (all shifts), citizen/staff interactions, and crisis management over a fair period of time.

Given the criteria outlined above, the Committee notes that it had neither adequate resources nor sufficient time to fulfill such an exacting assessment of public safety operations staffing levels. However, desirous of responding as fully as possible to the Selectmen's request, it was decided to focus on the following issues:

1. Assess, to the degree possible, whether the failed override has affected public safety and the safety of the LPD/LFD personnel.

2. Perform, within the constraints of time and resources, a limited organizational analysis. This includes an examination of the organization's environment, budgetary issues, organizational structure and management, quantity and quality of personnel, program development capacity, and the external environment, which subsumes issues of values, culture, and power relationships.
3. Examine how the failed override affected patrol coverage, police tasks, including traffic control, and special mission work.
4. Determine how the failed override has affected preventive and proactive fire and police tasks, including community policing.
5. Establish whether emergency and non-emergency demands are being met in a timely fashion or whether the Departmental cuts have increased response times and at what cost to the Community and to LPD/LFD personnel.
6. Discover whether administrative requirements, such as report writing and training, have been affected, and whether Departmental needs and those of the officers in both Departments are being met.

Organization of the Report

- I. Critical Issues for Public Safety in Lexington
- II. Public Outreach Activities
- III. Comparative Analysis
- IV. Combined Dispatch
- V. Lexington Police Department
- VI. Lexington Fire Department

I. CRITICAL ISSUES FOR PUBLIC SAFETY IN LEXINGTON

1. Lack of Understanding of Police and Fire Protection

Community discussions by Town decision-makers, the public, and various vested interest groups surrounding the 2003 failed override, and the 2004 successful override, clearly showed that issues of public safety were given a very low priority. Invariably, concerns for public education, library services, and transportation, such as Lexpress, etc., ranked higher than any considerations related to police and fire. Since the public

discourse reflects the values of the discussants, the issue of beliefs and values bears examination.²

Values are the beliefs that guide actions. They not only provide the rationale for action but also set forth the ultimate purposes of the political entity and stakeholders concerned. As such, values provide the Town with its reason for, and justify the investment of, spending scarce resources on behalf of the public enterprise. Studies of public safety have long recognized that public beliefs about the purposes of police and fire are enmeshed in certain assumptions about the nature of these institutions. These assumptions are, more often than not, wrong.ⁱ In fact, misconceptions abound. Police and Fire are appreciated *when they are needed*. When faced with trouble, citizens expect quick police and fire responses. Further, when victimized, citizens want and expect the services of fully trained professionals. However, *when not needed* (or in times of financial exigency), police and firefighters are often perceived as expendable and uneconomical, and therefore subject to contraction and reduction in force at will.

The Committee unequivocally supports the various services enumerated above and has no wish to detract from their importance to the Town. However, it also points to long accepted cross-cultural, historical research on the relationship between law (including counsel, mediation, and police) and the development of society's other social institutions, such as family, religion, polity, and economy.

In their seminal work, Freeman and Winch documented that as societies evolve and become complex, their *social institutions develop sequentially* with great regularity.ⁱⁱ Each preceding institution constitutes a necessary condition for development of the next. Further, as societies develop, their social institutions evolve along a single dimension ranging from simple to complex as follows: a symbolic medium of exchange, punishment of crimes through government action, religious, educational, and government specialization, and writing. This regularity suggests not only causative relationships but also the assignment of priorities that help stimulate the evolution of complex institutions in modern societies.

The point here is that historically, institutions of commerce and law precede any other institutional systems such as religion, education, and related governmental specialization. When Lexington voters gave the largest number of their votes to Public Safety in the June 2004 Override, they implicitly followed these historical patterns. In other words, for a majority of Lexington voters, public safety assumed a greater priority than any of the other services.

Lexington's 2004 vote can also be explained by considering the work of psychologists Abraham Maslow, Chris Argyris, Frederick Herzberg, and Rensis Likert,

² An informative example of public misconceptions of the need for public safety and the functions of police was witnessed by the Chair and a number of Committee members at the occasion of an Appropriations Committee meeting on April 12th, 2004. At that meeting, an individual speaking for the Lexington Public Library, unabashedly proposed that funding slated for three police officer positions be traded to ensure the Library's pending accreditation.

all of whom wrote and experimented on the factors affecting human motivation.ⁱⁱⁱ In particular, Maslow's well-known *hierarchy of needs* comes to mind. Taking the form of a pyramid, fundamental physiological needs for food and shelter form the base of hierarchy. Safety needs come next. Both take precedence over other needs, such as the need for belonging, esteem, and self-actualization. They do so because they relate to *physical survival*. The point here is that *public safety, provided by the police and fire departments, is essential to people's survival*. Therefore, consideration of *public safety needs should be the Town's first order of business, not the last*.

2. Public Safety: Basic Needs as opposed to “a la Carte” Services.

Part of the Committee's mandate included the request to provide the Town with a “series of recommendations and assess their projected impact assuming various levels of funding.” The wording seems to suggest a “you get what you pay for” approach that is more appropriate for the world of commerce than for the provision of public safety. To resolve this dilemma, the Committee decided to determine, to the degree possible given available time and resources, *a baseline for public safety services*. Beyond that it identifies *prioritized needs for police and fire protection* to be met as soon as feasible.

3. Critical Needs Exist in the Combined Dispatch, Lexington Fire and Lexington Police Departments

Due to the Committee's accelerated work process (documented in this Report's subsequent discussions), it quickly identified *critical needs in the Lexington Fire Department, the Combined Dispatch, and the Lexington Police Department* which, if left unattended, constitute *serious threats to community safety and to the safety of the personnel* working in those Departments.

A major Committee finding is that *LFD and LPD services and resources have gradually eroded over several years* and that the budget cuts inflicted due to the 2003 failed override constituted just the “last blow.” Prior to the 2005 budget restorations both Departments were below minimally acceptable standards. The 2005 budget restorations addressed *most, but not all*, of the critical needs of the Lexington Fire Department. By contrast, the 2005 budget restorations to the Combined Dispatch and to the Lexington Police Department have been minimal. *Today, both the Combined Dispatch and the Lexington Police Department continue to operate below minimally acceptable levels*.

4. Police and Fire Safety Needs should be an Integral Part of the Public Discussion in the Planning of new Commercial and Housing Construction

Newsprint and public discussions of capital construction in Lexington, such as AvalonBay, approved by Town Meeting on May 12, 2004 (consisting of 387 apartment units), and the planned Bio-Lab to be sited at a former Raytheon Company location, identify many problems, ranging from increases in school-aged children to traffic congestion. They also discuss solutions to some of these problems in the form of

remediation funding by the developer, commuter shuttles, on-site amenities, and even contracts with Lexpress, and so on.³ It is unfortunate that most such discussions fail to consider the added burdens these developments would place on the Town's police and fire protection services. In particular, the planned Bio-Hazard Laboratory represents special safety risks, given its planned production and experimentation with biological pathogens and toxins. Fire protection and public safety would not only have to deal with the intrinsic dangers of a bio-hazard laboratory but would also have to protect against possible terrorist threats.

5. Creation of a Permanent Advisory Committee on Public Safety

The Committee's study of the effects of the 2003 failed override and its subsequent work with of the Combined Dispatch, Lexington Fire Department and the Lexington Police Department uncovered a number intrinsic issues and problems that cannot be remedied by this Report alone. It is therefore recommended that the Board of Selectmen appoint a *Permanent Public Safety Advisory Committee* to advise the BOS, Town officials, and the public of all matters related to Town fire safety, police, and dispatch protection on an ongoing basis. The Committee's charge should include the following activities for both Departments. (1) Regular meetings with the leadership/command staff; (2) Accessibility to all Department members, (3) Directly observe field operations; (4) Review operational procedures; (5) Advise on training and equipment needs; and most of all (6) provide a permanent bridge to the Town leadership. Committee membership should *include at least one bona fide expert each on fire science and law enforcement*. The complexity of both fields necessitates the presence of such experts. Without such expertise on board, serious missteps would ensue, thereby obviating the Committee's efforts.

6. Engage Professional Staffing and Deployment Studies of the Lexington Police and Fire Departments

The Committee recommends that Lexington engage the efforts of well established professional associations to conduct a thorough assessment of the function, resource allocation, scheduling, and productivity of the LFD and LPD. While the Committee's work benefited from the existence of the *Standard for the Organization and Deployment of Fire Suppression Operations, Emergency Medical Operations, and Special Operations to the Public by Career Fire Departments (NFPA 1710)* of the International Association of Fire Chiefs, no such universally applicable standards exist for police.

There are important reasons for the absence of universal standards for police in the United States. The reasons have particular poignancy for Lexington. Police organization in this country is simply an accident of birth because the Founders had a deep fear of national police forces for very good reasons. After all, they suffered under the heavy handed approaches to law enforcement imposed on them by the British Crown. The Constitution of the United States of America and several Amendments to the Constitution (better known as the Bill of Rights) were explicitly written to stop such

³ See for example, Lexington Minuteman, Thursday, March 4, 2004.

abuses as unreasonable searches and seizures, warrants issued without probable cause, double jeopardy, etc. While the government of the United States is *sine qua non*, its law enforcement practices (and much of the rest of our justice system) are better suited for the 18th Century than the 21st. Unlike police operations in other developed countries and sister democracies, American police consist of approximately 35,000 individual departments. Superimposed are state and federal police forces, including the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). But these were created relatively late in the life of the Republic (1900s) and grew slowly in response to emerging crime control needs. Rather than commit to uniformity, universal standards, and equal application of resources, each police department functions largely autonomously, with chiefs being selected by mayors, town managers, selectmen, etc. In principal, chiefs run their departments as they see fit.⁴

Notwithstanding the historical evolution of police, there is a *Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies* (CALEA), located in Fairfax, Virginia. It accredits police departments on a *voluntary* basis. Years ago, the Chairman of this Committee, as a member of the *Lexington Police Manual Policy Committee*, strongly recommended to the BOS and Town Meeting that Lexington pursue accreditation with CALEA. Accreditation offers major advantages. It brings a department up-to-date in terms of “best practices”, and helps shield it in liability litigation, etc. Examples of accredited police departments in Massachusetts include Waltham, Newton, Stow, Northborough, MBTA Police, etc. While the LPD initiated the accreditation process, it did not follow through due to a lack of manpower and funds.

When the tax override failed in 2003, and Police Department resources were cut, a group called Lexington Citizens for Public Safety conducted a study, which focused almost exclusively on comparative data from surrounding towns and on Lexington’s crime rates.⁵ While well intended, it is noted that the consideration of such data as the Uniform Crime Reports, arrest rates, and crime clearance rates, is not very helpful in justifying public expenditures for police or in measuring police performance.⁶ In fact, most law enforcement experts agree that such data are largely inappropriate as a basis for staffing and deployment decisions.^{iv} This is because they fail to reflect the complexity of modern policing and therefore can only lead to false conclusions. Instead of bringing about increased efficiency or accountability, budgeting in tight years tends to bring on political interference.

About 90 percent of a police budget is spent on personnel. Fiscal contraction, as occurred in Lexington, brings on personnel retrenchment. Junior officers are laid off due to union and civil service provisions. Unfortunately, police work is not divided into separate self-controlled programs which can be cut at will without seriously affecting a Department’s basic functions. The fact is that personnel cuts lead to a redirection of police activity into the patrol units, which are the heart of policing. Specialized personnel, such as detectives, are reassigned to support patrol activities. This is what

⁴ Common links exist through Training Academies, inter-agency agreements, conferences, etc.

⁵ See, for example, the study of Robert Beckwith, “Article 5, The Need for Restoring our Public Safety Resources,” Lexington Citizens for Public Safety, July 28th, 2003.

⁶ Personal communication with the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP), June 2004.

happened in Lexington, as will be detailed in this Report in the section devoted to the LPD.

II. PUBLIC OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

To provide opportunities for public input in its assessment of the failed override, the Committee developed a brief questionnaire asking the following questions:

Question 1: “Have you, or any member of your family within the Lexington community, been directly affected, on a personal needs level, by the reduction in police and fire services in the Town? If so, briefly state how you have been affected.”

Question 2: “Are you aware of any individuals who may live outside of Lexington who were affected, on a personal needs level, by the Reduction in police and fire services in the Town? If so, briefly state how they were affected.”

Three venues for public input were provided: (1) Publication of the questionnaire in the Lexington Minuteman (twice); (2) Placement of the questionnaire on the Town’s Web site; (3) Offering an e-mail address and a postal address for responses.

The Committee received *two mailed responses*, with one indicating a concern for the lack of police officers, especially at the High School.

There were *nineteen responses to the Web site* questionnaire. Of these, seventeen were in the negative to both questions. One response noted that the respondent needed help with a neighbor’s dog, a pit bull, and was told that “no one could help.” Another response noted:

“Six weeks ago, on January 27th, I fell and broke my hip. It was 11:30 on a Friday night. We did not wait long for the Fire Department to come, but then we had to wait 35 minutes for an ambulance to come here from Woburn. I am just grateful that I did not suffer a stroke or a heart attack, because that 35 minutes could have meant life or death.”

There were *two e-mail responses*, negative on both questions.

In summary, the Committee’s effort brought twenty-three responses, with three respondents reporting negative effects. However, one of these incidents, had it been life threatening, could have resulted in a citizen’s death and made Lexington vulnerable to litigation. On the surface, the Committee’s experience with public input would seem disappointing. But the results do put into stark relief a previous point in this report: *Police and Fire services are appreciated when needed.* But when they are required they must deal with life-threatening situations, where seconds and minutes spell the difference between life and death.

III. COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

The Committee spent considerable time debating the collection and analysis of comparative data on public safety practices and programs offered by Lexington's neighbor communities. As pointed out earlier, such data are questionable in their utility for public safety decision making for a variety of reasons. Of particular concern is the validity and reliability of statistical comparisons, which are seriously jeopardized by significant differences in definitions, time frames (in which jurisdictions collect their information), and the categorization of services.⁷ Rather than "compare apples with oranges," or cherry-pick the information to make its points, the Committee selected basic data points, such as the number of residents, total operating budgets, budget expenditures per capita, number of dispatch, police and fire personnel, number of fire stations, etc. and presents these in straightforward graphs and measures of central tendency. Given the many *caveats*, the graphs and charts in this section are best viewed as *snapshots of public safety practices in neighboring communities* and beyond.

The comparative analysis begins by looking at key program expenditures of the Town of Lexington for the past four years. **Chart 1, Town of Lexington – Program Budget** traces public expenditures for police and fire from Fiscal Year 2001 to Fiscal Year 2004. It also shows percent changes resulting from the 2003 failed Override, overall percent changes since 2001, and compares this information with expenditures for Community Services, Education, Culture and Recreation, Social Services, and Town Government. A quick perusal of the chart shows that the failed Override resulted in Public Safety experiencing the second largest cut, 10.2%, after Social Services which were reduced by 20.2%. Of the six programs selected in this analysis, only two received increases, Education, which received an additional 2.2%, and Community Services (DPW), which grew by 1.2%. The latter increase is attributable to an increase in the Town's water and sewer 'enterprise' funds.

Looking at program funding changes from Fiscal Year 2001 to Fiscal Year 2004, one sees healthy growth in Education (18.18%), Culture and Recreation (8.98%),⁸ and Community Services (5%), very modest growth in Town Government (0.45%), severe cuts in Social Services (-17.37%), and a tangible decline in Public Safety (-3.33%). It is noteworthy Lexington's population grew since 2001. So did construction, traffic volume, and the demands on both police and fire services. Most important, **Chart 1** clearly shows that cuts to Public Safety began long before the 2003 Override, and that the 10.2% cut inflicted on its 2004 budget was simply the latest and most severe setback.

Chart 2, Police Department Staffing compares Lexington (pre- and post Override) with fourteen (mostly neighboring) communities in terms of the number of sworn police officers, police per 1,000 population, total 2003 and 2004 operating budgets, per capita FY 2004 budget, percent change in operating budgets from 2003 to

⁷ For example, at the time of the Committee's work, complete data for 2003 were not yet available from many communities. There is also much variation in specific budget categories. For instance, the "public safety" category in Lexington includes EMS (Emergency Medical Services), Building Inspections, and Forestry.

⁸ The Committee fully recognizes that Recreation services are funded by Town 'enterprise' funds.

2004, miles of public roads, population size, and the number of dispatchers. The chart also features the dispatcher breakout categorized by police and fire fighter personnel.

The chart shows that *Lexington*, after the failed Override, *had the lowest ratio, 1.4 of police officers per 1,000 residents of any comparison community*. In terms of actual numbers, Lexington, with a population of 30,355, had 41 police officers. Only three communities with significantly lower populations, Bedford (12,595), Concord (16,993), and Winchester (20,810), had fewer police officers. *Even with the FY 2005 staffing restoration, Lexington, with 47 sworn officers, continues at the very low end of staffing patterns*. Only Melrose (population 27,134), Winchester (population 20,810), Wellesley (population 26,613), Concord (16,993), and Bedford (12,595) have fewer police officers. Nevertheless, Lexington's small Police Department has to cover the highest public road mileage (153.39). Only Chelmsford has more public roads (186.99).

Chart 3, Police Department Staffing: Sworn Officers by Town and Populations graphically demonstrates that Lexington's police officers (pre-and post override) serve larger populations than do police departments in the majority of the comparison communities.⁹ For example, Burlington, with significantly fewer residents, has a much larger number of sworn officers than does Lexington. The FY 2005 budget restorations do not begin to catch up with most comparison communities.

Chart 4, Sworn Officers: Ratio and Population compares the number of sworn officer per 1,000 population and population size. It illustrates Lexington's lowest ratio of sworn officer compared to other towns, with the exception of Arlington. However, Arlington's ratio of officers to population is better.

Lexington's Combined Dispatch situation looks equally bleak. There are seven dispatchers. Only Winchester, Concord, and Woburn have fewer dispatchers. Concord and Winchester have significantly fewer people to serve. Only Woburn, with its five dispatchers, serves a larger population. However, all of its thirty-nine firefighters are fully trained as dispatchers for all shifts. **Chart 5, Dispatchers by Town Populations** graphically illustrates these points.

It is noted that Lexington's 2005 budget restoration does provide for the hiring of one additional dispatcher. However, this addition does not change the equation in any significant way because coverage of one full-time (FTE) dispatcher requires the hiring of an average of 5.5 to 5.7 persons, to provide the requisite coverage of 24 hours per day, seven days per week (24/7).

Chart 6, Fire Department Staffing compares Lexington (pre-and post-Override) with the same fourteen communities in terms of operations employees, fire fighters per 1,000 population, 2003 and 2004 budgets, per capita expenditures, number of fire

⁹ Sworn Officers are those with general arrest powers. In Lexington, sworn officers are all full-time and part-time police officers including patrol, detectives, and supervisory officers. All officers are sworn into service under Massachusetts General Law (M.G.L.) 41, Section 98, which includes all ranks but excludes special police officers and civilian support personnel (including brown uniformed but unarmed officers).

stations, public road mileage, and population. The Committee findings are similar to those found in police staffing. Lexington has a ratio of 1.71 operations employees per 1,000 residents. This datum includes all staff with the exceptions of the chief and secretary. Lexington has 52 operations employees. Only Melrose (population 27,134), Winchester (population 20,810), Bedford (population 12,595), Tewksbury (population 28,851), and Concord (population 16,993), have fewer fire-fighters. The post-Override closure of East Lexington's Fire Station put the Town into the same league as Bedford, with one fire station serving a population of 12,595, and only 79.86 public road miles to cover.

Even with the FY2005 budget restoration and two functional Fire Stations, Lexington remains at the low end of the comparison communities. There are two fire stations in Winchester, Wellesley, Concord, Needham, and Burlington. The remaining Towns each have three fire stations or more. As will be discussed in the **Section V** of this Report, Lexington needs to pursue the acquisition of a third fire station rather than consider closing one of its stations, if it wishes to catch up with the Town's existing and growing fire safety needs.

Chart 7, Operations Employees by Town and Populations, graphically demonstrates the comparatively low number of fire fighters in Lexington.

Chart 8, Operations Employees by Town and 1000 Population depicts the ratio of operations employees by 1,000 residents by Town, for Fiscal Year 2004. **Chart 9, Fire Stations by Town and Populations** graphically demonstrates the severity of the FY 2004 budget cut on the Town's Fire Department: Lexington had one Fire Station like Bedford. Only Bedford has one-third of Lexington's population and half the public road mileage.

As previously outlined, the next section of this Report discusses in detail the Committee's findings on the Town's Combined Dispatch Office (911).

IV. COMBINED DISPATCH

Lexington's current dispatch system grew out of a major crisis in Town during which a citizen died. An administrative inquiry into Lexington's emergency response by Ralph D. Gants, Palmer & Dodge (Gants Report) describes the incident as follows:¹⁰

"At roughly 5:30 a.m. on Sunday, August 1992, Kathleen Dempsey telephoned the emergency line of the Lexington Fire Department in an operator-assisted call and told the dispatcher that she had been attacked. She stated her address, but the dispatcher did not hear it. The Lexington Police Department was not notified of the call until 10:47 a.m. that morning, when another dispatcher listening to the recording of the call heard the address. Patrol cars were immediately sent to the address. When the police arrived, they found the body of Kathleen Dempsey."

The Gants Report fully investigated the incident. It also proposed a series of administrative actions and recommended fundamental improvements to the Town's emergency response dispatch systems. In particular, the Gants Report noted as follows:

"Indeed, a consolidated joint police-fire dispatching center, physically located at the police station, thoughtfully planned, adequately housed, equipped, and staffed, and blessed with the wholehearted support of the leadership of the Police and Fire Departments, could demonstrably improve the efficiency, supervision, and cost-effectiveness of public safety dispatching in the Town of Lexington(Page 32)."

With regard to staffing, the Gants Report recommended that a Combined Dispatch Center should mean two dispatchers on duty at all times..."except perhaps from midnight until 8:00 a.m." However, the Report clearly qualified the single dispatcher during the night shift coverage by noting that the *"dispatcher would not be alone if the center were located in the police station; the police desk officer, who should also be trained in dispatching, would be available to offer assistance, relief, and guidance (Page 33)."*

As a result of the Dempsey tragedy and the Gants Report's recommendations, the current Combined Dispatch System was located at the Lexington Police Department. Historically, Lexington's Dispatchers have asked for nine to ten dispatcher positions to get the job done. For several years, the Combined Dispatch (911) employed nine full-time dispatchers. By 2002, the Unit had shrunk to a total of eight dispatchers. The failed Override resulted in the loss of still another position. Today, the Combined Dispatch operates with seven full-time dispatchers, supplemented by part-timers.¹¹ The part-time pool consists of six persons.¹² Current shift coverage consists of two dispatchers during the day shift, two dispatchers during the evening shift, and one dispatcher during the

¹⁰ Ralph E. Gants, Palmer & Dodge. **"Report of the Administrative Inquiry into the Lexington Fire Department's Delayed Emergency Response to Kathleen Dempsey's Call for Assistance."** (Report to Town Manager Richard J. White and the Board of Selectmen). Boston, MA., 21 September, 1992.

¹¹ The Dispatcher Union temporarily agreed that the Town could use part-timers on an "as needed" basis to avoid expensive overtime.

¹² Of part-time dispatchers two had been LPD cadets, one is a firefighter, and one is a fire captain in Melrose, MA.

overnight shift (2-2-1). Combining police and fire (911) made sense financially. In general, service probably improved. However, some specialized knowledge, such as fire fighting equipment and communications has probably been lost in the process.

Current staffing and work patterns mean that in 2004, the Town's Combined Dispatch has fewer dispatchers than the Gants Report deemed necessary in 1992. Even with the restoration of one additional dispatcher in FY2005, the numbers do not rise to the level of the 1992 recommendations. The Gants Report stated explicitly that there should be two dispatchers per shift at all times. As previously noted, it takes 5.5 to 5.7 persons to fill each position 24/7, 365 days per year. Thus 11.0 to 11.4 persons would be the minimum required. However, with the recent FY 2005 hiring of one dispatcher, the total rises only to 8. **This means that twelve years after the Gants report was issued, we are still at least three persons short.**

Nationally, dispatch work has evolved over time. It has become specialized and professional. Dispatchers must complete training at the Dispatcher Academy (held at the Massachusetts Fire Academy). The training is conducted by APCO, a nationally recognized training academy for 911. The curriculum includes the proper handling of medical emergencies and 911-fire-training. Lexington's Dispatchers work shifts similar to those of the LPD officers. In general, they work four days and have two days off per week. Dispatch shifts break out as follows: The overnight shift runs from 11 p.m. to 7 a.m.; the day shift runs from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m.; and the evening shift from 3 p.m. to 11 p.m.

A well functioning 911 system is essential for community safety and well-being. *When properly staffed, organized and equipped, 911 is one of several important layers of support that exist between a town's residents, the police patrols in the community and on the road, and a well functioning Dispatch Desk.* Dispatchers perform two distinct roles in fire fighting and medical emergencies: they take calls and they dispatch. They must understand ambiguous telephone calls. They must make precise judgments about these calls. They must "multi-task" and perform triage without a second thought. And they must interpret the caller's information accurately and determine which police and/or fire resources have to be dispatched to the location of the emergency. Dispatchers have to make split-second decisions daily. Often, these decisions make the difference between life and death. The Gants Report compared the role of dispatchers to those of a radio operator in battle. It is essential that dispatchers have an intimate and specialized knowledge of fire fighting requirements, communications, and the community (streets, addresses) in which they work. Training, experience, and proper supervision are *sine qua non* for well-functioning 911 systems.

Before the failed 2003 Override, Lexington's Combined Dispatch was backed up by Lexington's Desk Officers 24/7. *With the five Desk Officer positions abolished and not replaced with the successful 2004 Override, dispatch work has become increasingly difficult and stressful.* In 2003, Dispatch received a total of 77,100 calls, of which 12,850 required the dispatch of fire, police, and medical services personnel. Their monitoring duties include (but are not limited to) seven 911 lines (five 911 trunk lines and two direct

dials, all of which have TTY capability (hearing impaired equipment). These lines must be answered in 4 rings or they are automatically transferred to Bedford, which is Lexington's 911 backup. In turn, Lexington backs up Bedford, Hanscom, and Lincoln. Anytime an error is found in the caller data, Dispatch must fax that information to the Verizon Telephone Company. Dispatch work currently includes much clerical labor, computer entry, the watching of prisoners in the detention cells, monitoring the cameras scanning the outside of the LPD building and message taking. There are 12 other telephone lines which produce a constant volume of calls for fire, police, medical, roads (ice, snow, potholes, flooding, and trees down), animal control and numerous administrative calls. On nights, weekends and holidays, Dispatch must also answer the DPW, Water, Sewer, and Dump calls. Also included in their duties is the monitoring of the Fire Alarm System, the Mutual Aid Fire Alarm System for surrounding towns, the METRO Fire Alarm system, which includes most of the cities and towns inside of Route 128, BAYPERN, and NEMLEC. The last two systems manage police information and involve requests for highly trained special units, such as SWAT teams. Dispatch also follows the Hospital Status Monitor to ascertain, before a patient is transported, if the hospital is open and has the level of service the patient requires. All incoming 911 calls and all dispatches of fire and police must be entered into the computer and printed. Dispatch furthermore monitors the surrounding towns' fire and police frequencies for accidents that may require Lexington's assistance. When national terror alert levels change, Dispatch must notify certain people in Town. During nights, weekends, and holidays, Dispatch must monitor the alarm system for the Sewer Pumping stations. Further duties include the handling of routine telephone inquiries, requests for details, requests for directions, paperwork for courts and numerous background, license, and registration checks. Dispatch must maintain the information it needs for performing the work. There are numerous volumes containing procedural instructions (such as emergency medical procedures) and data (such as listings of missing or stolen property). To access any of that information, specific formats and codes must be remembered.

Today, Lexington's Combined Dispatch works far beyond the parameters of its contract with the Town. Many times dispatchers cannot take a break. Staffing is possible only by personnel taking on double shifts¹³ and by "yielding" on vacation requests. To reduce overtime pay, dispatchers are given time off. Currently, workers have accrued much time off but cannot use it because the 911 system must literally be kept "afloat."

The Committee's public outreach and direct observations documented incidents that indicate that Lexington is less safe today because of the changes that have been made in the public safety arena since the failed Override. Cutting 911 staff is one such change, especially when coupled with the abolition of the Police Department Desk Officers. The FY 2005 restoration of one dispatcher does not change the equation.

The Committee has identified a number of issues and problems with the current Combined Dispatch which, if unaddressed, would raise the Town liability if another critical incident were to occur:

¹³ The issues of double shifts and their relationship to stress, is discussed in detail in Section V on the Police.

- *The Combined Dispatch is understaffed – and backup nonexistent.* Staffing should consist of two dispatchers per shift (2-2-2). They should be supported by Desk Officers, preferably 24/7.
- Lexington's Dispatchers must go back and forth between three different computers with aging software. More sophisticated 911 software exists and would improve service, but Lexington does not have it.
- Members of the LPD and LFD cannot directly communicate with one another in the field because their equipment is incompatible. As a result, they must go through 911.
- Some LPD Officers in Charge (OIC) have not been trained in the handling of fire calls. This issue is particularly critical during night shifts, when there is but one dispatcher on duty.¹⁴
- Staff reduction has resulted in inadequate supervision of dispatcher activities. New dispatchers, in particular, must have better supervision than is currently provided. In the absence of Desk Officers, the OIC is frequently distracted by other police business. And lack of proper supervision invites mistakes.
- Dispatchers and especially new employees need training. As early as the 1992 Gants Report training was identified as a critical need. This need persists and should involve formal training, annual updates, on-the-job training, and informal training, such as trainees accompanying police and fire fighters before going on line.
- Multiple emergencies result in some telephone calls not being answered.
- The current "call-back" system for Dispatchers may take as long as 45 minutes. This is a long time, during which much can go wrong, especially if the initial communication was less than clear.
- When the volume of calls is high, they are currently being "juggled." If these calls involve medical emergencies, such as cardio-pulmonary resuscitation (CPR), or choking incidents, the juggling can lead to serious mistakes. And mistakes, the Committee was informed, happen every day.
- Current staffing patterns afford no "safety net" for the Town dispatchers. This means that there is no "downtime" after critical incidents. This adds to the high stress experienced by the dispatchers.

¹⁴ Belmont, with a much lower population than Lexington, has ten dispatchers and two lieutenants supervising them. Belmont even has telephones installed in the station restrooms.

- Fire calls or medical emergencies require dispatchers to stay with the radio. If other emergencies develop at the same time, they represent an invitation for disaster.
- Dispatcher morale is low. This should not be surprising, given perennial understaffing, using part-timers as stop-gaps on a regular basis, and working double shifts.
- Police Department Detainees should never be exclusively watched by Dispatchers. The latter must devote their full attention to the handling of emergency calls. During such times, detainees could easily hurt themselves (including suicide). Looking periodically at the closed circuit television screen focused on the detention cells does not assure detainee safety and puts the Town at significant risk.
- The physical facility in which the Combined Dispatch must work is nothing short of appalling. The room is long and narrow. It is uncomfortably hot in the summer and too cold in winter. The layout is drab, the chairs and tables antiquated and uncomfortable. This situation should be remedied as soon as possible.

In summary, twelve years ago, the Gants Report identified “failures of leadership, communication, training, and equipment” as key variables in the Dempsey tragedy. Sadly, these issues persist to the current day. Twelve years ago, Kathleen Dempsey’s father hoped that her tragedy would become a catalyst for the preservation of life in Lexington. He noted that “...Lexington can do greatest honor to her memory by creating a dispatching center and an emergency response system that will serve as a model for the nation, and ensure to the extent humanly possible that what happened to her will never happen again (Page 36).” The Committee notes with sorrow that Mr. Dempsey’s hopes have yet to come true.

Before turning to the next **Section on Police**, one more point is in order. The Committee understands that there are currently discussions about developing a Combined Dispatch with Lexington, Arlington, and Belmont.¹⁵ While there is nothing intrinsically wrong with searching for alternative modes of service deliveries for public safety, such activities should not be solely driven by concerns with cost savings. Instead, they *need to consider the full parameters of public safety* and the fact that split seconds and intimate community knowledge can spell the difference between a citizen’s life and death. Therefore, it might be advisable to give priority to Lexington’s current needs first. Also, **Section I, point 5**, recommending the creation of a Permanent Advisory Committee on Public Safety with at least one bona fide expert in police and fire safety, is relevant here. Implementation of this recommendation and including at least one member of such a committee in any discussions of public safety would help ensure that discussions would go beyond

¹⁵ Personal communication with Paul Hamburger of the Town’s Appropriations Committee, July 2004.

parochial concerns as far as fire fighting, dispatch, or police are concerned. Thus, a repetition of what happened to public safety during the 2003 Override might well be avoided.

V. LEXINGTON POLICE DEPARTMENT

Introduction

The literature on police is diverse and complex. Few people really understand the police function. *Understanding police requires understanding our democracy, legislative process, and the intricacies of the criminal justice system.*¹⁶ It also calls for a realistic assessment of the capacity of the criminal justice system to meet public expectations and requires an in-depth understanding of the social, political, and behavioral problems that exist in society.¹⁷ Misconceptions concerning the police role center around two extremes: crime fighting and traffic control. In reality, policing is extraordinarily complex. Ample research describes the diversity of police work.¹⁸ For example, in medium sized municipal jurisdictions, only about 10% of calls for police assistance involve criminal behavior as such. About 30% involve “order maintenance” issues, such as the management of disputes. The remaining 60% of the calls involve community services and the management of non-criminal situations. Police are the first responders to a broad range of social and individual problems. Accessible twenty-four hours a day, police must guard the safety, health and welfare of the social body.

Order maintenance implies consensual resolution of conflict situations. The concept is often used synonymously with such terms as social services or social work. Activities include, *ceteris paribus*, performing the functions of family counselors, working as agents of socialization of potential delinquents, and engaging in a myriad of roles usually associated with more specialized agencies of social control. Some scholars have described police work as “situational management.” According to this view, *order maintenance becomes the central activity of law enforcement and involves enforcement duties and social work simultaneously, in an effort to resolve conflict situations.*

Democracy and police are interdependent. The very functions of free society depend, in large measure, on how effectively police discharge their duties.¹⁹ We look to police to protect our civil liberties, such as freedom of speech, freedom of assembly, free elections, etc. We expect police to protect us from predators, to give us a sense of safety and security, and to facilitate pedestrian and vehicular traffic. In short, how police discharge their many duties affects, to a large degree, the quality of our lives.

¹⁶ Herman Goldstein, “Reshaping the Police Function: The Problem-Oriented Approach,” January 17, 1989, page ii. (Draft of Textbook). In the field of criminal justice, Herman Goldstein is considered to be the father of community policing.

¹⁷ Ibid, page iii.

¹⁸ James Q. Wilson. **Varieties of Police Behavior: The Management of Law and Order in Eight Communities.** 1982. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

¹⁹ Herman Goldstein. **Policing a Free Society.** 1977. Cambridge, MA: Ballinger, (Page 1).

Understanding modern policing is made even more difficult because of a number of conflicts inherent to the police role. First, police are invested with the awesome authority to arrest, search and detain citizens. Police are the only social institution vested with the authority to use force to enforce the law and to maintain order. Police are often feared because of that authority. Second, conflict results from a very real discrepancy between public expectations and the reality of what police can do. Police did not create the social conditions with which they are expected to deal, yet they are blamed when things go wrong. Finally, there is conflict among police regarding their role in society. Some reject the social service functions and prefer to focus on law enforcement. Others may welcome the social service role and derive much satisfaction from it. Police leadership, in turn, may reflect the same points of view, considering the close normative influence of the police subculture.

Community Policing

Community policing is a philosophy that promotes and supports organizational strategies to address the causes of crime and reduces the fear of crime and social disorder through problem-solving strategies and community partnerships. It represents a fundamental shift from traditional reactive policing. If effective, it means the absence of crime and disorder. It looks upon the community as a partner in the policing enterprise and no longer as a passive consumer of police services. True community policing empowers police officers, decentralizes command, and encourages innovative problem solving.²⁰ Many scholars view community policing as the best strategy available for reducing authoritarian style of policing and for improving police-community relations.

Today, there are many kinds of community policing. Some assign officers to neighborhoods, organize training programs for community leaders, and are characterized by a “bottom-up” approach to deal with community problems. While not always effective, research does show that community policing reduces the level of fear in communities. Community policing goes to the heart of quality of life issues. Since police cannot be everywhere, the approach uses activities such as neighborhood watch programs to make it more difficult for criminal to go about their business unnoticed. In essence, community policing is a problem solving approach. It does not necessarily mean saturating the community with blue uniforms.

Community policing is not a panacea. There are many problems and issues connected with it. For example, almost every police department has a different definition of community policing. Many departments define it in terms of administrative areas traditionally used by police departments to allocate patrols. Others simply pay lip service to the concept and go on as before. Most approaches develop at least some degree of partnership between the police and the community. In general, departments turn to one of three strategies to implement community policing: *deployment, crime targeting, and*

²⁰ Bureau of Justice Statistics. **Community Policing in Local Police Departments, 1997 and 1999.** Special Report. Washington, D.C.: Bureau of Justice Statistics. February 2001.

collaborative efforts.²¹ Deployment strategies include such activities as bike patrol, mini-stations, etc., with residents doing little more than provide information to the police. Collaborative strategies are best. In this approach residents participate in problem identification and problem solving. Included here are very active advisory councils. Other efforts include citizen academies. Research shows that smaller police departments tend to rely on long-established social control mechanisms and see little need for additional strategies. Key factors associated with sustained community policing are: (1) a favorable political environment, (2) police leadership, (3) system-wide support within the police departments, and (4) willingness of residents to cooperate with police.²²

Continuing citizen participation is also contingent on a number of issues within and outside of the police department: (1) there must be a supportive political environment in which local political leaders are totally committed to the success of community policing, (2) there must be structured opportunities for feedback to and from the community. This, in turn, calls for procedures to assure that once problems are identified by the community, police will return to those same sources to report on progress, lack of progress, and jointly determine future problems solving activities, (3) police departments must also establish several practices designed to sustain community policing. These practices include specialized training for supervisors and the rank and file. Continued training is essential. Community Officers must be assigned on a permanent (non-rotating) basis. This is critical if officers and residents are to develop relationships that lead to active crime prevention. Another factor involves organizational decentralization. Officers must be empowered to make their own decisions. Finally, community policing must have the wholehearted support the police leadership.

Before the failed override, the LPD had implemented a number of elements of community policing. The Department decentralized decision making. There was a bike patrol and a police citizen academy. The Department had initiated a community survey to provide feedback to the Police Department and assess citizen perceptions of the Town's policing efforts. The public feedback was very favorable.²³ There is also a Police Manual Committee to review the Police Department Manual and make recommendations at least once a year for revisions, amendments, and additions.²⁴ However, given the small size of the LPD, and its perennially limited resources, *it would have been unrealistic to expect the Department to implement community policing in the terms delineated above.* As discussed in the following paragraph, the LPD was not able to designate sworn personnel as community policing officers per se, with exception of the School Resource, Family, and Narcotics Officers. Institutionalized collaborative efforts and structured

²¹ Albert P. Cardarelli, Jack McDevitt and Katrina Baum. 1996. "The rhetoric and reality of community policing in small and medium-sized cities and towns." Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Society of Criminology, Chicago, IL: November 22, 1996.

²² This section of the community policing discussion is indebted to Cardarelli's and McDevitt's research on community policing cited in footnote 19.

²³ Jennifer Balboni, Shea Cronin, and Jack McDevitt. 1999. **Lexington Police Community Survey.** Boston, MA.: Center for Criminal Justice Research, Northeastern University.

²⁴ The Police Manual Committee meets once a year. It is not designed to provide public feedback on public order or crime problems.

feedback to and from the community did not, and do not exist. Most important of all, there has not been a particularly supportive political environment for the LPD.

Baseline Levels for Police Services

The issues of public safety and the determination of baseline levels of police and fire services were thoroughly explored by the Committee. What is safe? What is safe enough? What are the baseline levels for public safety service? Nationally, there is much debate on these issues. Unfortunately for Lexington, these issues have become overly politicized over the past few years, much to the detriment and demoralization of both the Police and Fire Departments. A more dispassionate discussion shows that these questions are relatively easy to answer for fire services, given the existence of National Standards for Fire Departments. For police, as previously discussed, baselines are more difficult to establish. Nonetheless, some answers can be provided by first looking at how LPD compares with local police departments nationally. Thereafter, the Committee's own assessment through interviews and questionnaires are useful.

The Bureau of Justice Statistics (U.S. Department of Justice) provides periodic reports on law enforcement management and administrative statistics. In 2001, the Bureau published a **national picture of Local Police Departments**.²⁵ The following data are relevant to this Report:

- The average number of employees of police departments serving a population of 25,000 – 49,999, has a total number of 82 persons. Of these, 64 are full-time Sworn Officers, 17 are civilian workers and 9 are part-time employees. Part-timers consist of 1 sworn officer and 8 civilian personnel.
- The vast majority of these departments (97%) participate in a 911 emergency telephone system located at the local police department.
- Three-fourths of these 911 systems are enhanced, capable of pinpointing the location of a caller automatically.
- 42% of these departments operate a temporary holding (lockup) facility for detention overnight. (Lockups are different from jails).
- 54% of these departments have animal control services.
- 90% of these departments have adopted community policing.
- 88% of these departments have an average of 13 full-time community policing officers.
- 67% of these departments have an average of 2 School Resources Officers (SRO).

Looking at these national data, it is readily apparent that the LPD is way below any national practices in terms of the average number of employees (Sworn Officers and Civilian), the number of community police officers, and community policing. In a similar vein, the Committee's direct assessment discussed below clearly shows that

²⁵ Matthew J. Hickman and Brian A. Reaves, **Local Police Departments 1999**. Washington, D.C.: Bureau of Justice Statistics, May 2001, NCJ 186478.

cutting the LPD force had devastating effects. Today, there are fewer police covering the Town, there is less effort at enforcing the traffic. On top of that, there has been a notable lack of support from Town management and Town leadership.

In the light of this discussion, LPD staffing levels before the failed Override should be considered baseline. At a minimum, funding at the 2002 levels (for both police and fire) should not be subjected to overrides. However, in the Committee's considered opinion, *nothing would be worse than codifying the 2002 staffing levels for police and fire. This Report is designed to provide interim answers to a public safety crisis caused by the failed 2003 Override.* It should serve for the short term only, until the recommended professional studies are conducted.

What makes a good Police Department?

The work of a good police department is defined by the excellence of its services to the public and the quality of the work life for its members. Applying sound administrative practices and using modern scientific techniques, a good department will promote professionalism among its members (Guyot, 1991, op. cit. footnote #45).

Leadership

The Committee looked at leadership issues affecting the LPD morale. After the failed Override, two senior police officers chose early retirement. While the Committee has no knowledge of their reasons for leaving, it notes that the loss of experience and leadership has had a detrimental impact on the Department. Also, the loss is indicative of things "not being quite right" in the Department. LPD questionnaire results (discussed in detail in the final segment of this Section) were critical of management. While a certain degree of criticism of management is present and expected in any organization, the degree of dissatisfaction exceeded these norms. Lack of advocacy was the leading complaint. Unlike other Town programs which have exceptionally well organized, erudite, and decidedly vocal advocacy groups, police and fire do not have any such external support.²⁶ As discussed in detail below, police and firefighters felt they were not adequately represented in the 2003/2004 budget discussions. The prevailing concept relayed in the questionnaires was that they had been "held hostage" in order to force voters into accepting the 2003 Override. The respondents clearly feel they had been let down by the Town Manager, the Board of Selectmen, and their Department's management. This issue is, without a doubt, the single most important factor in the Police Department's low morale. In general, *the perception* of lack of representation and leadership can have profound impact on a police department. It is also a leading cause of stress.

²⁶ This observation does not mean that both Departments did not try to inform the public of their work or needs. The LFD, in particular, has disseminated lots of information through the years to little avail.

How to measure Police Effectiveness?

Historically, the quality of police performance has been measured by compiling and tabulating statistics, such as crime in the community, arrests, cases cleared by arrest, criminal summons, traffic and parking tickets issued, fines generated, residential and commercial alarms, accident rates, and percentage of stolen property recovered, etc.²⁷ In particular, the Federal Bureau of Investigation's **Uniform Crime Reports (UCR)** are looked at as a key measure of the effectiveness of a police agency.^v Lexington's public discussions and reports before and after the 2003 Override followed the same assessment pattern. Unfortunately, UCR and related statistics are **reactive measures**. As previously discussed (**Section I, 6**), such data not only fail to recognize the complexity of policing but, more importantly, they *fail to recognize the monumental changes that have occurred in policing during the past twenty years*. The *UCR and related statistics seek to measure police effectiveness after the fact*. *By contrast, the objective of modern law enforcement is the prevention of crime*. Today, good police departments are proactive. They are more concerned with protecting citizens from harm than with tallying up some measures of arrests after victimization has occurred. As early as 1950, O.W. Wilson (considered by many to be the father of modern policing) stated that the primary purpose of police is to serve the citizen: "The police do this by preserving the peace and protecting life and property against attacks by criminal and from injury by the careless and inadvertent offender."²⁸ *Therefore, the best measure of police department efficiency is the absence of crime and citizens' perceptions that their persons and property are safe.*

Staffing Patterns of the Lexington Police Department

Historically, LPD staffing had been fairly consistent since the 1960s, with staff ranging from 52 to 54 persons. While police staffing remained relatively steady, Lexington's population increased. Its complexion changed from rural to suburban. Population density increased. The LPD polices 16.64 square miles, 153.39 miles of public roads, and protects the community 24/7, 365 days per year. Over the years, calls to police have increased. In 2003, police responded to 13,976 calls for service.²⁹ Most frequent service calls involved building and person checks, almost 2,000 medical assists, responding to residential and commercial alarms, and motor vehicle accidents. Police also responded to crimes ranging from arson to burglary to larceny. They enforced protective orders, made arrests, issued summons, detained arrestees, issued motor vehicle citations and participated in court cases.

The LPD work day is broken down into shifts: A-shift runs from midnight to 08:00 a.m., B-shift runs from 08:00 to 16:00 p.m., and C-shift runs from 16:00 to midnight. B-shift usually is characterized by a high number of incident reports, traffic and other calls. C-shift also has a high number of traffic and incident calls. The late night A-shift usually has a lower call volume, with staff conducting building inspections

²⁷ Edward A. Thibault, Lawrence M. Lynch, R. Bruce McBride. 1990. **Proactive Police Management**. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

²⁸ O. W. Wilson. 1950. **Police Administration**. New York: McGraw-Hill.

²⁹ 2003 Police Department Town Report (Sgt. Joseph O'Leary, Draft).

and dealing with drunk driving incidents (DWI). Before the 2003 Override, the LPD divided the Town into four quadrants and patrol sectors. Four patrol cars covered their respective quadrant, with a 5th patrol car providing backup as needed. In addition to the police patrols, the Department had a day time Detective Bureau which included one general detective, School Resource Officers (SRO) for the Lexington High School, the Middle School, and the Minuteman Technical School, and a Family Services Detective. There was also a Drug Task Force Detective, three administrative assistants for handling records, budgeting, billing, firearms licensing, data entry, etc. There was a Center Officer who covered the Town's Center Mondays through Fridays, and evenings. The Department also had an evening detective and one desk officer per shift, as well as a mechanic, a Parking Enforcement Officer, and a Cadet program.³⁰

Investigating the effects of the 2003 failed Override on the LPD staffing proved to be one of the more vexing activities for the Committee. In effect, the LPD lost 15 Sworn Police Officers. Twelve Patrol Officers were laid off. Three officers left for other reasons: one was reassigned to the School Department, two transferred to the Framingham, MA Police Department. As previously discussed, one Dispatcher was lost, as was the Cadet Program (consisting of five part-time persons). Responding to the cuts, the Department chose to eliminate Overtime (except for emergencies). Town patrol coverage was reduced from four cruisers to three. The savings accrued due to these measures were used by the Department to retain three police officers on an unofficial basis. Detectives and two SRO officers were reassigned to patrol. The Center Officer was cut. All five Desk Officers were cut. The traffic clerk was cut.

To clarify the LPD staffing issue, three charts are presented. **Chart 10** shows three columns depicting Police Department Staffing Changes: (1) 2002 - 2003 pre-budget cut staffing, (2) 2003 – 2004 post budget cut staffing, and (3) restored staffing due to the successful June 2nd 2004 Override. In essence, Lexington's total full-time Sworn Officers went from a high of 53 in 2002/3 to a low of 41 after the failed Override. With the 2005 budget restorations and rehiring, full-time Sworn Officers will increase to a total of 47. One of these forty-seven positions is currently occupied by two half-time Sworn Officers. Looking at the number of full-time Patrol Officers, Lexington went from a total of 32 to 26 after the failed Override. After the budget restoration and rehiring, the number of full time Patrol Officers will increased by one position to 27. This means that the LPD will continue to have five fewer patrol officers than it had in 2002.

Looking at Command Staff, **Chart 10** also shows the loss of one Lieutenant (who took early retirement) and four Detectives due to the failed Override. FY 2005 budget restorations and rehiring will reconstitute the Command Staff to the *status quo ante*. The budget restoration reinstated part of the cadet program. Three cadets will be added (compared with 5 in 2002, and none in 2003). Apparently there are no plans to restore the Traffic Clerk.

Chart 11, Pre-and Post Failed Override, Police and Fire Staffing Levels further elaborates LPD staffing changes. (Lexington Fire Department manpower and

³⁰ LPD Staffing Allocation and Deployment, undated, acquired February 4, 2004.

equipment changes are discussed in **Section VI** of this report). *This Chart reflects that for the duration of the Committee's work, Combined Dispatch, LPD, and the LFD were moving targets.*³¹ This means that while the Committee's work went on, the Town, recognizing the harsh effects of the failed 2003 Override, was reviewing the 2004 budget and preparing the 2005 budget. Over half a million dollars were "found" and some existing programs, such as Lexpress, received additional 2004 funds. Having already identified serious public safety needs, the Committee worked at a fever pitch to provide some input for the deliberations. On **Chart 11**, the category titled "*Projected Post Summit*," reflects the planned addition of six police officers. The category titled "*Projected with Override*," adds one dispatch position and restores 3 cadets. Of special interest is the last category titled "*not requested*," which includes the 5 desk officer positions, 1 Middle School Resource Officer, 1 traffic clerk and 2 cadets. Thus, **Chart 11** graphically reflects Police Department staffing positions that were not restored.

To further clarify staffing changes over time, **Chart 12**, depicts 2002-2003 LPD staff before the budget cuts, 2003-2004 staff after the budget cut, and Fiscal Year 2005 staff restorations. The Chart is particularly helpful in depicting LPD positions that are currently being restored and the positions that remain cut.

Desk Officers

The final staffing issue to be discussed is the **police desk officer position**. This position (consisting of 5 sworn officers) was abolished by the failed Override. *Desk officers were literally the first police officer a citizen would see when coming to the Police Station. They were also the "hub" of the Police Department.* Desk Officers man computer consoles, interact with the public, control the doors, take telephone calls, back up Dispatch, and serve as the message center and backbone for departmental and ongoing patrol activities. They communicate with patrols and cruisers. They know and relay what is going on in a particular shift. They know if an arrestee is being transported to the Station. They serve as the Booking Officers. This means that desk officers "book", fingerprint, and photograph arrestees. They check out prior criminal records. Desk officers are responsible for all detainees at the Station. As required by law, they perform periodic physical checks of detainees. However, "just glancing" at the closed circuit television screen of the cells (as currently happens with the lone nightshift Dispatcher) is insufficient and opens the Department and Town to serious liability issues. Persons deemed suicidal, must be checked every 15 minutes.^{vi} Desk officers also take reports phoned into the Station. They accept "walk-in" reports from citizens. The latter may include accidents reports (including hit-and-run), missing person reports, lost and found property, etc. They process and fingerprint applicants for firearms licenses, job applications calling for fingerprints, etc. In extreme emergencies, desk officers can drive a cruiser the scene of the emergency. As such, they give the Department a much needed edge of flexibility whenever backups are required.

³¹ While this is typical of most "operations research," the ever changing picture did not make things any easier for the Committee.

As discussed in the Section IV, the abolition of the desk officer has seriously and detrimentally affected Dispatch. For example, the sole Dispatcher may be on the telephone handling a cardio-pulmonary resuscitation or fire call. He/she cannot leave that telephone for the duration. Who could handle another telephone call, which could easily be another emergency? What if a citizen, experiencing an emergency, comes to the police station? Last, not least, the desk officer provides a necessary flexibility for handling emergencies.

Nationally, the position of the desk officer position is not ubiquitous. Nor are desk officers required to be Sworn Police Officers. In some departments, desk officers cover busy shifts only. Others have civilians serving in that function.^{vii} But there are considerable advantages to having Sworn Officers in that position. Unlike civilians, they know the profession. They know the legal limitations of what police can and cannot do. They can communicate more readily and quickly with fellow officers in the field. *Therefore, the restoration of the Desk Officer would be highly desirable. In fact, in the absence of 2-2-2 Dispatch staffing, the Desk officer is indispensable.* Finally, civilians cannot fingerprint arrestees, nor can they serve as emergency patrol backups.

Mutual Aid

Section VI of this Report on the Lexington Fire Department discusses the subject of mutual aid. It notes that the Town has mutual aid agreements with neighbor communities for purposes of fire protection and medical emergencies. However, mutual aid is generally not practiced in policing with rare exceptions, such as the hot pursuit of very dangerous fleeing felons. The reasons for the absence of mutual aid in policing are found in the organization of police and in their roles and missions. Among these are distinct jurisdictional boundaries, differences in departmental philosophies and training, and much diversity in public expectations and clientele. Last, not least, there could be serious issues of liability.

The remainder of this Section discusses the following topics: (1) the lack of public awareness of police work and its effects of the LPD; (2) the practical effects of the LPD downsizing; and (3) the analysis of LPD responses to the questionnaire distributed to the LPD.

Lack of Public Awareness

As previously discussed (**Section I.1.**), the Committee was troubled by the almost total lack of awareness of what police work entails. Yet the absence of knowledge has not kept a good many persons from suggesting at various times that police positions be freely traded for increases in public expenditures for other purposes, be that the library, Lexpress, or other programs.^{viii} Having attended several public meetings during which Lexington's budget was discussed, the Chair is left with the distinct impression that for some individuals, both the LPD and the LFD are nothing more than a "shopping basket," where items can be traded at will. Yet the Chair has never observed a single instance in which members of the LPD and Fire Departments reciprocated in kind. Misinformation

was also kept afloat. At the February 25th 2004 Summit Budget meeting, a direct participant rhetorically suggested that the FY 2005 budget had fully restored public safety funding to the status quo ante of the failed 2003 Override. Moreover, it was suggested that this action would result in severe cuts in other vital Lexington programs. Most members of the Public Safety Staffing Committee were not only present at the Summit but, had they been called upon, would have easily been able to set the record straight. These comments are not designed to stifle any public discussions of program needs or the exploration of alternative ways for providing services. To the contrary, what Lexington needs is more public discussions and more involvement of citizens in Town activities than is presently the case. However, what is recommended here is that any public safety suggestions consider the full consequences of whatever is being proposed.^{ix}

Practical effects of the 2004 LPD Budget Cuts

- **Increased workload and reduction of services.**

The LPD staff reductions discussed above severely impacted the work load of those who remained. The four-sector patrol was reduced to three. Only five persons covered a shift (due to vacations, sick leave, earned time off, etc.). The Center Officer was cut and reassignments deprived the schools of their SROs, and the Town of the Family and Narcotics Officers. However, none of these cuts was accompanied by any decline in family violence and the need to enforce protective orders. The substance abuse problems appear to have increased.³²

- **Loss of Community Policing**

Reacting the only way it could, the Department returned to a **reactive mode of policing**. Community policing was all but eliminated. Community outreach programs, such as National Night Out, Police Officers attending community meetings, station tours, school visits, etc., had never been widely utilized by the LPD. While the Department has been able to maintain a minimal presence at Lexington's annual Discovery Day, it has done so by using volunteers or granting time off for participating. Bicycle Patrol, begun in 1992 in response to the growing number of persons using the Minuteman Bikeway, is all but eliminated today. When in operation, the Bike patrol not only covered the approximately 5 miles of the Minuteman Bikeway in Town but also patrolled recreation areas, school and community functions in and around Lexington. In the recent past, the bikes have only been used on Patriot's Day and the recent Reenactment held for the Democratic National Convention. The failed Override eliminated the Child Safety Car Seat Program. LPD participation in NEMLEC (17 member communities regional response team using shared resources in specific areas of expertise, i.e. SWAT, Motorcycle, Computer Crimes, etc.) has been reduced to only two officers from the required 10% participation of the

³² See, for example, a direct quote from LHS Substance Abuse Prevention Social Workers Julie Fenn and Beth Mintz, **Lexington Minuteman**, February 19, 2004.

Department's Sworn Officers. This is but one example of Lexington not living up to its interagency agreements. (Fire and medical emergency services are discussed in **Section VII**, of this Report).

The sum total of these actions has put Lexington into a regressive mode of law enforcement to a point where policing used to be in the 1980s. This puts the LPD out of line with national police trends. It also means that the LPD cannot focus on the problems of thriving white collar crime, mushrooming identity and computer theft, fast-traveling burglary rings and related "hit and run" criminals. Pursuing these types of crimes, calls for time-consuming tracking and extended surveillance. In short, the 2003/2004 manpower reductions effectively cut the Department's ability to perform these duties and have thereby placed all of us at risk. More importantly, the focus on crime prevention has been lost. In line with the previous discussion, *prevention is best in police work. Intervention is good, while reacting to a crime that has already occurred, represents the worst possible option.*

- **Reduction in the Quantity and Quality of Services**

Budget cuts have led to prioritizing the way the LPD responds to calls for service. Rapidity of dispatch and public assistance decreased for many calls upon triage. Differential responses are harsh on any victim who expects to see a police officer and does not get one. *Police must be adequately staffed to facilitate quality service in all matters, criminal and non-criminal.* If police are overwhelmed as they were after the failed 2003 Override, they hurry from one incident to the next. They are more apt to react by protecting themselves from unreasonable workloads. For example, they may cut their initiation of assistance and give short shrift to low priority calls. As previously noted, detainees are currently supervised at time by the 911 Dispatchers only. Secretaries should not fingerprint anyone. Even with the 2004 budget restoration of six positions, the Department is still six positions short from where it was in 2002/2003. In short, unlike recent public statements by Town management regarding the delivery of services, *the LPD cannot deliver the same level of services it did prior to the failed Override. It must do less with less. In short, the budget cuts resulted in the loss of elasticity of the Department. In particular, the loss of assignment flexibility raises the specter of serious safety problems, especially if extraordinary emergencies were to occur.*

- **Increased Risk to Officer safety**

Single officer responses to vehicular accidents and burglar alarms can expose police to serious dangers. There is a high accident rate around the Lexington portions of Route 2 and Route 128. Lone Patrol Officers, when encountering armed persons, are at grave risk of harm.

- **Increased Public Safety Risks Due to Tangible Changes in Policing Practices, and the Loss of Deterrence**

Prior to the failed Override, Lexington enjoyed a genuine reputation as a well policed and safe society. Criminals avoided driving through Town knowing that driving infractions or vehicles in disrepair would draw law enforcement attention. Post-override reductions appear to have changed these perceptions, while driving infractions appear to have increased.³³

While the number of accidents in and around the Town Center appears to have remained relatively stable before and after the failed Override, there is a clear need for a police presence in the Center. In other words, police should be visible in the Center to identify violators and to deter offenders.³⁴ To shed light on failed Override law enforcement changes, the Committee collected LPD data on the subject. **Chart 13, Change in Citation and Traffic Enforcement Attributable to the Failed Override** demonstrates just how much change has occurred. **Chart 13**, compares the total number of warnings, civil citations, criminal citations and arrests over a six months period (July through December) in 2002, with a six months period (July through December) in 2003. The reductions in law enforcement actions are dramatic. Warnings decreased by 62.5%, civil citations decreased by 53.7%, arrests decreased by 14.6%, and criminal citations decreased by 41.6%. Combined, citations and traffic enforcement, attributable to the failed Override, decreased by a striking 55.7%. It is also clear that crime (however it is counted), driving infractions and other law enforcement problems did not decrease during the same time period. It is axiomatic in social science research that *perception is as important as reality*. The only persons who benefited from such a dramatic reduction in law enforcement in Lexington were the criminals and the scofflaws. Police presence (whether in the Town Center or on the streets), unquestionably deters crimes and traffic infractions. The mere visibility of a cruiser and officer also reassures the public and reduces the likelihood of robberies. The failed Override reduced police coverage in the Town to such a degree that public safety was threatened. The current partial restoration of coverage is still not adequate to get the job done.

- **Loss of Cadets**

The 2003 failed Override eliminated the Department's **Cadet Program**. Cadets cost approximately \$30,000 per person, while Sworn Officers roughly call for the expenditure of \$51,000 to \$52,000 per year per person. Cadets are best viewed as police apprentices. They can perform detainee cell checks, data entry, take messages, and run errands. However, cadets have no power to arrest and cannot triage calls for service, etc. Cadets are

³³ Source: LPD Patrol Officer Michael Barry, Committee member.

³⁴ Source: Lt. Mark Corr, LPD.

helpful in the Department. Their youthful enthusiasm adds to the quality of the work environment. But cadets cannot replace the role and function of a Sworn Officer. They are learning the police profession and should therefore never be looked upon the same as a bona fide police officer. Neither should cadets be viewed as cheap labor. FY2005 restoration of 3 Cadets does little to change the staffing equation. It is also understood that the hours Cadets work were purposively reduced to avoid the need of paying applicable benefits.

- **Additional LPD Service cuts.**

The failed Override resulted in the following service cuts:³⁵ there is no response to minor vandalism. Minor larcenies are no longer investigated, only reported. There is no police response to scams. There is much less emphasis on traffic offenses. In particular, Massachusetts laws prohibit juveniles with learner's permits to drive with other teens in their vehicles. There is now the perception that the LPD cannot enforce this law because of manpower shortages. The issue sometimes boils down to the question of whether officers should concentrate on more serious driving infractions, such as drunken driving or whether they should enforce teen driving violations. Police responses are now based on "crime solvability." This means that police will act if they think that they will be able to identify the perpetrator of a crime. If that probability is low, they are unlikely to invest their scarce resources. Citizens who lock themselves out of their cars are on their own.

- **Parking Enforcement**

Lexington (pre- and post-Override) has one Parking Enforcement Officer (PEO). This officer generates considerable income for the Town. Lexington also had a Traffic Clerk. The clerk's position was cut in 2004 and has not been restored. Currently, there is no designated person to handle the massive paperwork. Instead, the work is done on the fly by the PEO and two (already overworked) Departmental secretaries. The result has been a serious loss of efficiency and income. Under the provisions of Chapter 90, traffic enforcement fines are returned, in part, to the Community. This means that those who break the law, help pay for the repair and maintenance of the roads. A comparative analysis of money collected over a six months period (7-1-02 to 12-31-02 and 7-1-03 to 12-31-03) shows a 54.8% decline.³⁶ In terms of dollars, the Town collected \$81,150 during the last six months of 2002. By contrast, the Town collected only \$36,720 over the same time period in 2003. This seems penny wise and pound foolish. Aware of the need to produce income for the Town, the Committee suggested at the Summit meeting (during which

³⁵ Source: LPD, including information obtained from the LPD questionnaires.

³⁶ The data were collected and reported on March 16th, 2004 by the LPD.

2004 budget changes were being discussed) that the position of the traffic clerk (\$24,070) be considered. That position was and is a fiscal win for the Town.

- **Equipment and Technology is Aging and Breaking Down**

In March of 2004, the Committee discovered that many officers had outdated *bullet proof vests* (as vests age, the material disintegrates and officers become vulnerable to death and/or injury). At this point, the police officers have new (or adequate) vests. The Committee also discovered that many police officers did not have *radios* and had to share these as they reported for duty. Radios and communication equipment is the life blood of police and dispatch. Today, the radio issue has improved. However, eight more radios are presently needed. *Police cruisers* (used 24/2, 365 days a year) experience much wear and tear. Unlike previous practice, when old cruisers would be traded in for new ones, current Town practices hand over older cruisers to other Department heads. This permits further deterioration of the vehicles. As will be seen in some detail in the next segment of this Section, the situation is bad enough that Patrol Officers find themselves in the position of citing drivers for faulty cars, while their own cruisers may have the same visible deficiencies. *Departmental computers and cruiser laptops* are aging and breaking down. Laptops are essential to modern policing. Used 24/7, 365 days a year, they need regularly scheduled maintenance. They should also periodically be replaced. Laptop failures results in less time in the field and officers spending more time in the station writing reports. When broken, officers must turn to Dispatch for vehicular and driver checks. This, in turn, adds more work to an already overloaded Dispatch.

The Committee had neither time nor the expertise to explore *issues of new hardware and software*. But it strongly recommends that these issues be addressed *in the very near future*.³⁷ In addition, *rather than acquire separate systems for police and fire which may well happen if regionalized fire protection is pursued, all LPD and LFD communications hardware and software should have interoperability*.^x

- **Inadequate Levels of Training**

As happened with Dispatch, there is currently insufficient training in the Police Department. Whatever training does occur is limited to what is mandated by law. Unfortunately, the law only defines minimum training

³⁷ The Advanced Generation of Interoperability for Law Enforcement (AGILE) program was created by the federal government in 1998. It has four primary components: research and development, evaluation and pilot programs, standard development, and education/outreach. Contact with this Agency would be a good start whenever Lexington begins to consider purchasing public safety communications equipment and software.

requirements, not what is advisable in a litigious environment. Following the failed Override, the Massachusetts Criminal Justice Training Council reduced the mandatory yearly in-service training by 25% to 3 days! All other training is either grant specific, reduced, or eliminated. In 2001, the Department began to add personnel to the Civilian Traffic Unit (Special Police Officers, Crossing Guards, Dispatchers, and Cadets) who have not been trained by the Massachusetts Police Academy. The only training they do receive is what the law requires: cardio-pulmonary resuscitation and First Responder training. It is important to note that the adequacy of training is invariably a critical issue in liability litigation. Skimping on training is an invitation to disaster.

- **Problems with the LPD Physical Facility**

The housing of the LPD is antiquated and singularly unsuited for its work. The facility is spread over three floors, cramped, inadequately lighted, cold in winter, hot in summer, and uninviting. The Committee notes with sadness that in its presentation to Town Meeting, the Capital Building Committee did not even list the LPD or LFD. There is no fenced in area for the protection of cruisers and no sally port for the proper handling of arrestees. Town capital improvement plans need to seriously concern themselves with these buildings.

Brief Analysis of the Lexington Police Department Questionnaire

The Committee developed and administered a comprehensive questionnaire for the LPD (**Appendix C**). Respondents were guaranteed absolute anonymity. At the time, the Department had 53 active officers and dispatchers. Of these, 36 questionnaires were returned, reflecting a 68% return rate. **Appendix A** presents the compilation of the responses. The Committee encourages the reader to examine this Appendix to obtain the full flavor of problems, issues, and respondent perceptions. The following brief analysis highlights key points made by the respondents.

- Over two-thirds of the respondents thought that the Department was not very effective in the planning and preparation for the personnel changes mandated by the failed Override.
- The responses clearly show the Departments shift away from crime prevention and community policing. Respondents lamented the false image Town and Department leaders presented to the community that neither services nor safety had been compromised by the staffing cuts. Respondents also regretted their inability to intervene or follow up on domestic violence, medical health crises, troubled youths, and children at risk.
- Morale was relatively good before the failed Override. After the budget cuts, morale slumped. Almost 95% rated morale as “low.” Several added another response option noting there was no morale.

- Respondents did not blame the voters for their distress. But over 83% placed the responsibility for low morale on the decisions made by the Town Manager and Selectmen.
- Over 90% of the respondents blamed management decisions made by the Department.
- Labor relations and unions do not appear to be a major issue for the LPD.
- Over 86% considered their daily work environment as another important factor affecting morale.
- Surprisingly, over 58% of the respondents report much satisfaction from being able to provide service to the public. Many are saddened by the lack of support from management and the Town. Public safety should not be turned into a political carrot or stick.
- 86% thought training after the Override was inadequate. Respondents identified a wide range of training needs. They include emergency medical training, crime tracking, computers, defensive driving, defensive tactical training, interviewing, legal and procedural updates, identity theft and other white collar crime, specialty fields training, legal liability, firearms and training in less than lethal weapons, and training for the proper handling of school emergencies. Many deplored the fact that Lexington used to be, but is no longer a leader in many ways. For example, training used to include helping the elderly, community policing, and suicide prevention.
- After the Override, 78% deemed the availability and quality of equipment as low.
- When asked to rank the importance of the various police department positions, respondents prioritized needs in the following order: a 4th Patrol officer on the road, the 8th Dispatcher, a 5th Patrol officer on the road, and the Traffic Clerk. Interestingly, the Cadet positions received the lowest priority.
- A full 80.6% deemed support staff as inadequate. Secretaries are running up and down the stairs to cover their own responsibilities, the traffic office, front desk, booking room, and licensing. Inadequate support staff has led to missing paperwork, increased workloads, longer waits for information, and administrative work by patrol officers.
- Many respondents were concerned about public safety and officer safety. Some calls should have two officers present. Calls must be stacked. The Department had lost the ability to handle simultaneous emergencies. *Many tasks are carried out by persons not trained to perform them.* Supervision is lacking. There is burnout. Many could not understand why they were so “easily dismissed” by the Town.
- 78% of the respondents thought that service levels, after the Override, were low.
- Before the Override, a full 86% deemed the staffing levels had provided a safe work environment. *After the Override, 97% thought the work environment was no longer safe.* Relying on mutual aid puts everyone at risk.

- Over 97% of the respondents indicated that staffing levels after the override no longer provided a safe level of protection to the citizens. Two fatal automobile accidents and a serious accident involving a child were cited as examples of increased danger to the community caused by budget cuts. Response delays present risks of injury or death.
- *100% of the respondents did not think that the 2003/2004 budget discussions reflected the true needs of the LPD.* Many lamented the perceived sham that Lexington is “safe” and that “nothing usually happens in Lexington.”
- *100% of the respondents thought that public safety had not been given the priority it needed during the budget 2004 budget process.* Respondents recognized that public safety was cut disproportionately compared with cost. Public Safety is consistently the last Department to be considered. Many respondents felt unappreciated and discarded.

Stress and Double Shifts³⁸

As previously discussed, Lexington police officers, dispatchers, and firefighters appear to be undervalued by the public. They also appear underappreciated by management and Town leaders. They work in unpleasant environments with difficult clientele. Many are forced to work long hours, double shifts, and overtime, fuelled by absenteeism and understaffing. In short, their work is filled with tension, pressure, overload and stress. LPD, LFD, and Dispatch administrators have struggled to meet the public mandate, in spite of declining resources. Political leadership, always strapped for funds, prefers to spend scarce resources on politically more attractive constituencies. Thus, money goes to education, transportation, culture, community development, and Town management, while cutback management has been the order of the day, especially for the Dispatch and the LPD.

In general, policing, firefighting, and dispatching are stressful activities. But the Committee’s research shows that the LPD and Combined Dispatch exhibit a higher degree of stress than usual. (The Fire Department’s working environment and stress are discussed in Section VI of this Report). There are many sources of stress or *stressors*. One particularly strong stressor was the reduction in force executed after the failed Override. The apparent ease and swiftness with which the Town acted in discharging so many of their colleagues clearly caused severe stress for those who remained. The events suggested they were all “expendable.” In the literature, uncertainty about the future and lack of control over one’s environment, have consistently been tied to distress and illness in the general population. Beyond these cataclysmic events, research also shows that *stress stemming from within the organization*, is the biggest stressor of all.³⁹ There is the previously discussed problem with role conflict and public expectations. Beyond these, the literature identifies *leadership, administrators and supervisors as being among some*

³⁸ This segment of the discussion reflects Dr. Edith E. Flynn’s **Monograph on Stress** (1990) prepared for the National Institute of Justice.

³⁹ Yolanda M. Scott. 2004. “Stress among Rural and Small-Town Patrol Officers.” **Police Quarterly**, V7, N2 (June).

of the most highly stressful aspects of the police job.⁴⁰ Next, the literature lists perceived inequities in the police environment regarding the allocation of assignments, promotions and rewards as major stressors.⁴¹ In Lexington, the combination of lack of resources, antiquated equipment, understaffing, increased workloads, and lack of training opportunities have all added to the stress perceived by staff. Also, the way in which leaders balance officers' concerns with external environment demands, affects stress. Leadership varies by the administrator's management style, political skills, and connections to the community. Small Towns are notorious for pressuring the police organization.⁴² Why should Lexington be an exception in this regard? Given the high stress levels readily apparent in the questionnaires, the Committee strongly recommends that serious efforts be expended on team building, managerial skills and leadership training.

Shift work is an important characteristic of public safety work, along with hospitals, public transport, and power services. Most (not all) have adopted a variant of the three-shift system, providing organizational coverage 24/7. While shift work has been practiced for over one hundred years, the difficulties experienced by shift workers have only recently begun to be addressed by research on man's natural, biologically based sleep and wake cycles. The latter, found in all living organisms, are called *circadian rhythms* (from Latin, *circa* means about, *dies* means a day), and denote a cycle of 24 hours. Through the centuries, human life has evolved environmentally, socially, and biologically around one solar day. It has also developed into a normal social rhythm in which daytime is usually devoted to work, evening to leisure activities, and night is reserved for sleep. *Chronobiology* is the study of biological rhythms and concerns itself with the problems incurred with *living differently from the norm*, in particular working at night, on (night) shifts, and pulling double shifts or longer. Individual health and wellness requires *homeostasis* or a constant (steady) state of many physiological variables, such as blood pressure, pulse and temperature. Homeostasis is a simplification of these variables, which are not constant but reflections of rhythmic variations (even though the latter are within very narrow limits). These cyclical biological variables or circadian rhythms are responsible for daily changes in the body temperatures, in the heart rate and blood pressure, and in urinary excretions and hormone production. Circadian rhythms are affected by such factors as daylight, nightfall, eating and sleeping patterns. An individual's endogenous (or body) clock adjusts continuously to the exogenous (outside) reality of society's work-life schedule. This process is called *synchronization or entrainment*. Most persons are not aware of this process, except when they encounter the disruptive effects of jet-lag. Research shows that trans-meridian flights exert an acute effect on circadian rhythms comparable to the impairment of a 0.05% blood-alcohol level in the body.

⁴⁰ L.W. Brooks and N. L. Piquero. 1998/ "Police stress: Does size matter?" **Policing: An International Journal of Police Strategies and Management**. N21. See also: J. M. Violanti and F. Aron. 1994. "Ranking police stressors." **Psychological Reports**. V75, N2 (October).

⁴¹ Hans Toch. 2002 **Stress in Policing**. Washington, DC.: American Psychological Association.

⁴² L. Gaines, M. Southerland, and J. Angell. 2003. **Police Administration**. (2nd edition). New York: McGraw-Hill.

The same conflict between body-time and work-time experienced by persons traversing time zones during air-travel, is felt by shift workers, especially those who man shifts that rotate between day, evening, and night, and those who pull back-to-back (double) shifts. Chronobiological research shows that daily alertness rises and falls, following the pattern of circadian rhythms. Thus, alertness falls between 2 and 7 a.m., rises from 8 a.m. to noon, dips between 2 p.m. and 4 p.m., and rises again until about 10 p.m. Conversely, the pressure to sleep is most acute during the early morning hours. Times of greatest sleepiness are referred to as “zones of vulnerability” and will occur whether or not a person has had an opportunity to sleep. Most persons cope with the afternoon “slump.” But coping with sleepiness during the predawn hours is a different matter. Studies examining medical and performance catastrophes found that people suffer more heart attacks in the early morning hours (most often just after waking) than at any other time of the day.⁴³ Traffic accidents tend to occur during day-time hours, when traffic is heavy. However, single-vehicle accidents (including trucks) are highest between one and four in the morning, suggesting sleep impaired performance. More than 60% of accidents in nuclear plants have occurred during the night shifts. In particular, Three Mile Island and Chernobyl happened at night. So did the chemical plant explosion in Bhopal, India. At this point, we know that sleep deprivation and night work are tied to lowered performance, accident proneness, and other calamities of human error. Sleep deprivation is also tied to illness and disrupted social and family life.⁴⁴

Individuals vary in their need for sleep. Many cope with what is essentially an “unnatural” way of life. It is estimated that about 10% of all workers prefer night work, while the remainder simply tolerate it. Shift work is a necessity of modern life. While shift work is unavoidable, steady shifts, clockwise rotation of shifts, and a reduction of the rate of rotation can help.⁴⁵ Given the physiological impact of shifts, it is axiomatic that working double shifts, especially *when they occur on a frequent basis* as they do for Lexington’s Dispatch, Police, and Fire Department, are not only hazardous to the individual worker’s health but also hazards for public safety. While some persons may prefer such a schedule for personal reasons, it is not good policy from a public protection perspective. As previously discussed, Lexington should have adequate Dispatch staffing as recommended by the Gants report in 1992 and this Committee.

⁴³ Lahey Clinic Health Newsletter (Spring 1989), Boston, MA.

⁴⁴ J. Rutenfranz, M. Haider, and M. Koller. 1985. “Occupational Health Measures for Night-workers and Shiftworkers,” in S. Folkard and T. Monk. **Hours of Work**. New York: John Wiley and Sons.

⁴⁵ Dorothy Guyot. 1991. **Policing as though People Matter**. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

VI. LEXINGTON FIRE DEPARTMENT

Introduction

The Lexington Fire Department (LFD) is a full-time, professionally staffed fire department.⁴⁶ It serves a population of 30,355 living in a fairly dense suburban setting. Lexington has some light industry, professional buildings, and high-technology laboratories. Over the past few years, Lexington's population has grown. It has become more diverse. The elderly are the fastest growing segment in the population. As befits a healthy community, Lexington is in the process of expanding its housing stock (including affordable housing) and will add a bio-hazard laboratory as previously discussed. The newly remodeled Route 128 Rest Stop has added to the LPD and LFD burdens. The site has a compressed natural gas tank and accommodates trucks carrying hazardous materials and other dangerous cargo (as it always has since it opened).

Since 1941, the LFD provides Emergency Medical Services (EMS), using a "tiered response system." The latter consists of two rescue ambulances staffed with firefighters and emergency medical technicians (EMT) and Paramedics (EMT-P) capable of providing all modern levels of emergency care and transportation.⁴⁷ The EMS equipment consists of a primary rescue/ambulance, staffed 24/7, supported by a rescue/ambulance cross-staffed with additional on-duty personnel.

Lexington's Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs) have different levels of training: Basic Life Support training (BLS), and Advanced Life Support (ALS), also known as paramedic training.^{xi} As of February 28th, 2004, three of four LFD shifts provided paramedic coverage. *Currently, every shift has at least 2 paramedics.* All new hires will be fully trained paramedics. There are plans to have all firefighter EMTs fully trained at the paramedic level. ALS provides electrocardiogram analyses; the use of adjunctive devices to protect the airways of unconscious persons; inserts and maintains intravenous lines (IVs); administers physician approved solutions and medications, among other advanced procedures. Medical emergencies requiring ALS include cardiac disorders, cerebrovascular disease (e.g. stroke), diabetic shock, seizures, severe burns, trauma from falls or motor vehicle accidents, and maternity complications.

Previous sections of this Report (IV and V) discussed the importance of a speedy and adequately staffed emergency response system consisting of Dispatch, Police and the LFD. As noted, seconds count and literally make the difference between life and death. For example, to be effective, *treatments to minimize brain damage from acute stroke have to begin very soon after stroke onset.* Just as important as a quick response, is the need for a seamless interface between these agencies. Together, speed of response and agency interface stand for a "chain of survival" for any resident requiring emergency services.⁴⁸ Historically, the LFD emergency response times ranged between two and four minutes. As discussed below in the section titled "Practical Effects of the 2004 LFD

⁴⁶ Unlike departments staffed by volunteers or by "call men."

⁴⁷ Source: Lexington Fire Department, April, 2004.

⁴⁸ Source: LFD. Department Overview, 1/7/04, page 3.

Budget Cuts,” response times increased significantly after the failed 2003 Override, to the detriment of the affected residents.

The LFD has the capacity to conduct emergency rescues involving motor vehicle accidents and persons trapped in confined spaces. Currently, one engine company carries hydraulic cutting and spreading tools and related equipment.⁴⁹ The ladder truck is equipped to provide emergency lighting and ventilation. Even though Lexington is intersected by Routes 2 and 128, carrying extremely heavy commercial and private vehicle traffic, the LFD has only limited mitigation equipment and training for the handling of hazardous environmental and/or man-made materials. As such, the Department primarily provides scene control and data collection. It can, however, call on the Metro-Fire Hazardous Material Team, the Hanscom Air Force Base Fire Department, and neighbor communities for assistance. For example, on August 23rd, 2004, the Avalon Company received a package through the U.S. mail, containing a “powdery” substance and called Dispatch.⁵⁰ Both, the LPD and LFD responded. The LFD sent Engine 4, Ladder 1, Rescue Ambulance 1, and the Captain’s vehicle. Given the reality of today’s terrorist threat, Lexington’s Fire Chief called for the assistance of the Regional Hazardous Material Team. Even though the incident was a malevolent hoax, it clearly demonstrates the need for a fully staffed and equipped Fire Department. Bio-hazardous emergency calls are time consuming. A recent accident on Route 128, involved a truck carrying bio-hazardous materials including radiological waste. This incident illustrated not only the seriousness of the issue of adequate emergency responses but also demonstrated the complexity of such accidents. In that case, a number of federal, state, and local agencies responded, including Hanscom Air Force Base, which provided badly needed foam to suppress what could easily have turned into a larger problem.⁵¹

Next to the fire suppression, fire fighting, and emergency medical responses, the LFD performs many other functions. It ensures compliance with the Commonwealth’s Code of Massachusetts Regulations and General Laws. It is responsible for fire safety inspections. There are 56 facilities requiring inspections four times a year. They include public and private schools, licensed day care facilities, nursing homes, intermediate care facilities, hotels, motels and theaters. Inspections must be completed. If they are interrupted by emergency responses, they become even more time consuming. By law, the LFD must inspect residences put up for sale and newly constructed (commercial and residential) properties before anyone can move in. Fire protection and detection systems must be tested. All oil burners must be inspected. The installation and removal of underground storage tanks, propane and compressed natural gas storage must be overseen. After installation, wood burning stoves must be inspected. Schools and day care centers must perform fire drills, which the LFD either attends or accepts affidavits for. There is also a legal requirement, for insurance purposes, to conduct fire investigations. All fires must be investigated. The LFD has an ongoing partnership with the Water Department to test fire hydrant flow for essential water supply for fire

⁴⁹ Within the very near future, all engine companies will carry hydraulic cutting and spreading tools. Source: LFD: August 2004.

⁵⁰ **Lexington Minuteman**, August 26th, 2004.

⁵¹ According to the LPD Chief, average hazardous materials calls require four to six hours to address.

suppression. Hydrants must be checked for proper marking to assist finding them when covered by snow.

From July 1st, 2002 to June 30th, 2003, the LFD responded to 3,376 total emergency calls (fire and EMS).⁵² There were 1,988 EMS calls for assistance. There were approximately 1,282 emergency responses from the East Lexington Fire Station alone. About 1,500 calls involved the transportation of one or more patients to a medical facility. Most of the transports were made with the primary ambulance. But close to 400 were made by the back-up reserve ambulance. About 200 of these incidents occurred simultaneously. On average, the transport of patients requires one to two hours, depending on traffic and road conditions, the hospital, and the capacity of the emergency room. Each time an ambulance responds to a medical emergency, *it is no longer available for fire duty for the duration of that incident*. This means that it cannot be deployed if a fire or hazardous materials incident occurs. According to existing standards and guidelines (discussed in detail below), the LFD cannot leave a hazardous or potentially hazardous situation without first investigating and mitigating the incident. Examples of such incidents include, but are not limited to the following: (1) An electric wire is down, either live or not yet confirmed dead by the electric company; (2) Water in the basement that is flooding a furnace, water heater or other electrical source; (3) A carbon monoxide detector is activated with (or without) the occupant(s) feeling ill; (4) A patient is assisted, such as helping a person off the floor; (5) There is an odor inside or outside of a structure, e.g. wires burning, gasoline, natural gas or propane leaks, etc.

Annually, there are approximately 2.5 million dollars lost in Lexington due to fire.⁵³ Each new home, business, laboratory, adds new risks. There are approximately ten fires per week in Town, involving kitchens, stoves, halogen lamps, etc. The Town's fire alarm system is old. Since not all fire alarm circuits work, voice communication is necessary for mutual aid requests from Lexington to neighbor communities and Hanscom Air Force Base, must be relayed by telephone.⁵⁴

Baseline Levels for Fire/Medical Emergency Services and Equipment

Fire Departments (unlike police departments) have *national standards* to guide their organizations, equipment, level of services, and training, etc. Nationwide, municipal governments are mandated to follow these standards under the General Duties clause of the U.S. Congress's Occupational Safety and Health Administration Act. The Standards are the product of the Fire Service Leadership Partnership consisting of the International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC) and the International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF). The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) administers and publishes the standards, codes and guidelines. Several existing National Fire Protection Association standards address minimum staffing requirements for Fire Departments. For example, **NFPA 1500** Standard on Fire Department Occupational Safety and Health Program states: "while members can be assigned and arrive at the scene of an incident in

⁵² Source: LFD, February 2004.

⁵³ Source: Chief W. Middlemiss, February 5th, 2004.

⁵⁴ Source: Chief W. Middlemiss, August 31st, 2004.

many ways, it is strongly recommended that interior firefighting operations not be conducted without an adequate number of qualified firefighters operating in companies under the supervision of company officers. It is recommended that a minimum acceptable fire company staffing level should be four members responding on, or arriving with, each engine and each ladder company responding to any type of fire.”⁵⁵

Also of relevance to this Report is **NFPA 1710 Standard for the Organization and Deployment of Fire Suppression Operations, Emergency Medical Operations, and Special Operations to the Public by Career Fire Departments**. In effect since August 2, 2001, discussing national fire standards, the NFPA notes that these standards are designed to “provide the body politic and the citizens a true picture of the risks in their community, and the fire department’s capabilities to respond to and manage those risks.”⁵⁶ In turn, the IAFF goes on to note that “...any local government that fails to follow 1710 is subject to liability claims in the event of fire fighter injuries or deaths.”⁵⁷ The NFPA 1710 provides clear definitions of equipment and staffing: “Fire companies whose primary functions are to pump and deliver water and perform basic fire fighting at fires, including search and rescue, shall be known as engine companies. These companies shall be staffed with a minimum of four on-duty personnel.” Ladder or truck companies are similarly defined: “Fire companies whose primary functions are to perform the variety of services associated with truck work, such as forcible entry, ventilation, search and rescue...shall be staffed with a minimum of four on-duty personnel.”⁵⁸

On March 14th, 2003, before the failed 2003 Override, the International Association of Fire Fighters issued a study titled “Lexington Fire Department Geographic Information System Fire Suppression Capability Analysis.”⁵⁹ In its conclusion, the report states:

“This analysis shows the extent of coverage provided by the Lexington Fire Department with units responding from current station locations. The Lexington Fire Department has progressively allocated its resources to provide the best coverage available with those units. The problem remains that current coverage fails to meet any minimally accepted industry standards. Whether exploring 4-minute, 8-minute, ‘2 In/2 Out,’ NFPA 1710 Standards Section 5.2.3.2.1, or NFPA 1710 Standard Section 5.2.3.1.1, LFD coverage fails to meet industry standards.^{xii} The results show that the Lexington Fire Department is understaffed, and *current staffing levels should be supplemented with additional resources, including the addition of at least one new station.*”

The same IAFF study, upon examining the LFD work volume, also notes that staffing an Engine or a Ladder with insufficient personnel could lead to a loss of

⁵⁵ National Fire Protection Association, NFPA 1500, Standard on Fire Department Occupational Safety and Health Program, 1997 Edition.

⁵⁶ National Fire Protection Association, 2002, 1710-1.

⁵⁷ IAFF Campaign Pamphlet, discussing NFPA Standard 1710.

⁵⁸ NFPA 1710. 2001 Edition, Chapter 5, page 8.

⁵⁹ IAFF, March 14, 2003.

efficiency and increased fire losses. Referring to the National Fire Protection Handbook, IAFF states that “Staffing fire apparatus at a level below minimum requirements can result in a less effective and less safe fire fighting performance,” and that calling for additional assistance “should not be relied upon to replace adequately the required staffing and equipment needed immediately at the scene for initial attack and rescue.”⁶⁰

Before the failed Override, the LFD operated out of two strategically located fire stations. The Headquarters station housed 1 Shift Commander’s car, staffed with one captain, 1 Engine Company, staffed with 1 lieutenant and 2 firefighters, 1 Ladder Company, staffed with 3 firefighters and 1 Rescue Company (Ambulance), staffed with 2 firefighter paramedics or EMTs. Staffing at the East Lexington Fire Station included one lieutenant, two firefighters, manning one engine company. Paramedics (or EMTs), although assigned to an ambulance, must participate in fire fighting operations. If needed, they operate the second backup hose line. The bottom section of **Chart 11 (Section V)**, depicts NFPA standards and the LFD staffing prior to June 2nd, 2003. The chart highlights the discrepancies between the national standards and LFD’s staffing. The top section of **Chart 14**, titled **Initial Full Alarm Assignment Capability Deployed within 8 Minutes** also shows the recommended staffing levels and equipment called for by **NFPA Standard 5.2.3.2.2**.⁶¹

Also before the failed Override, staffing consisted of 54 firefighters. The Department fielded 4 groups of 13 firefighters. Each group consisted of 1 captain, 2 lieutenants, and nine firefighters under the control of the Fire Chief and Assistant Fire Chief. While this staffing pattern did not reflect the 15 or 17 firefighters per group recommended by the Standards, the Department managed to attain the required minimum of 12 person shifts by paying considerable overtime rather than fill existing vacancies with new employees. As was the case with the LPD, the Committee identified problems with the Fire Department that predate the failed 2003 Override. With no ‘fat’ to be trimmed, the budget reductions cut to the bone. The East Lexington Fire Station was closed. The station’s personnel were moved to the LFD Headquarters. The Department’s secretary was laid off. Staffing was reduced to a minimum of 8 firefighters per shift. One engine company was idled, and the shift commander’s car was eliminated. These changes are highlighted on the bottom of **Chart 14, 5.2.3.2.2, Initial Full Alarm Assignment Capability Deployed within 8 Minutes**. The Committee notes that *these cuts reduced the manning of the fire apparatus even further than before, below national standard requirements, and thereby placed public safety and property at risk. It also put fire personnel at risk.*

In February of 2004, the Firefighter Union and Town, through an ‘unfair labor practice’ agreement, developed a plan to increase on duty minimum staffing levels, as funds for overtime and unfilled positions became available. Both, the Town and the Department conducted incremental reviews of the budget. Gradually, staffing went back to a minimum staffing of 12. After the successful 2004 Override, the East Lexington Fire

⁶⁰ National Fire Protection Association. 1998. **Fire Department Occupational Health and Safety Standards Handbook**. First Edition, Stephen N. Foley, Editor.

⁶¹ The 15 to 17 personnel standard on **Chart 14**, apply to the use of Aerial Devices and Supply Pumps.

Station reopened with a staff of 1 officer and 2 firefighters. Staffing patterns at the LFD Headquarters returned to the *status quo ante* of the failed Override. As the bottom part of **Chart 11** shows, there is now a minimum of 12 persons per shift. If there is an absence due to illness, leave, etc., others get called in. The Committee probed to determine if there are enough funds to cover 12 persons per shift for 12 months. As best as the Committee could determine, currently available funding comes “close” to what is needed. Compared with the full funding the LFD had requested, the Department is approximately \$100,000 to \$150,000 short.^{xiii} Full funding would significantly reduce overtime hiring to maintain the 12 person per shift minimum staffing. There is an understanding that if money ran out, supplemental funds could be requested. Supplemental funding is clearly preferable to any reductions in current staff coverage below the minimum of 12 persons per shift.

Optimum LFD coverage of the Town calls for three persons per fire engine and truck. The shift commander or Officer in Charge (OIC) should not be involved with the actual fire fighting operations so that he/she can fully concentrate on the ‘big picture’ of the event and make appropriate safety calls. OICs protect not only the firefighters but also the residents at the conflagration site. The combination of OIC and firefighters help assure not only safety but also accountability during emergency incidents. Currently, the LFD cannot handle multiple alarms. In emergencies, the LFD uses a paging system to bring in additional personnel. However, there are issues of distance, frequencies and response times to be considered. *While the budget restorations were clearly helpful, increasing compliance with National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standards is recommended. Finally, given previously discussed housing and laboratory expansions, Lexington has a need for three fire stations.*

What makes a good Fire Department?

As with police, the work of a good fire department is defined by the excellence of its services to the public and the quality of the work life for its members. Applying sound administrative practices and using modern scientific techniques, a good department will promote professionalism among its members (Guyot, 1991, op. cit. footnote #45).

Leadership

Analysis of the responses to the Committee’s LFD questionnaires, reflect stress and strain related to the previous administration. However, the situation changed dramatically under the leadership of Chief William Middlemiss, who became Chief in March of 2004. Respondents were enthusiastic about his leadership style, the fact that he reports back to his Department on a regular basis, attends all necessary public meetings, restored standard operating procedures for the Department, and proactively represents his Department’s equipment and staffing needs in front of the BOS and Town Management.

Fulltime Administrative Assistant and/or Clerk

The failed 2003 Override resulted in cutting the only fulltime Administrative Assistant from the LFD. As a result, the Station is left empty many times (when all available staff and equipment respond to fire and/or medical emergencies). Anyone can wander in and walk about unimpeded. There is no one to answer the telephones and no one to schedule appointments. People coming to the Station must wait when emergency calls come in. There is no one to process accounts payable, payroll, or answer payroll questions. There are delays in obtaining permits. Time spent by the Fire Chief on clerical work reduces his availability to personnel and his time for decision making. Critical training time is reduced by having to play catch up with administrative work.

The Committee found it almost inconceivable that in this day and age of all-embracing bureaucracy, federal and state requirements, mandatory inspections, mandatory compliance and testing reports and reports, etc., the Fire Chief (and firefighters) must do the Department's clerical work.^{xiv} While the Committee was working on this issue, Town Management mitigated the situation with a secured, federally funded, half-time intern to work at the LFD from March 15th, 2004 to March 15th, 2005. While helpful, *the Committee strongly recommends that the LFD be supported by a full time administrative assistant and/or clerk.* In other words, chiefs do chiefs' work and clerks should do clerical work. What 3.5 million dollar operation functions without an administrative assistant or clerk? The Committee thought that the absence of an administrative assistant/clerk was serious enough to request (at the Town's Summit Meeting) that money be added to assure that the halftime federal intern would serve for the full year. Specifically, the Committee asked that the FY 2005 Base Budget include an additional \$7,020 to cover that clerk for 3.5 months until June 30, 2005. (See **Appendix E**).

Lack of Public Awareness

As was the case with the LPD, there seems to be an almost total lack of public awareness and understanding of what appropriate fire-suppression, firefighting and emergency medical responses entail. The readiness with which some residents wanted the East Lexington Fire Station closed was, as far as the Committee could ascertain, without precedent. *Fire, police, and emergency protections are not luxuries, they are necessities of life.* Without doubt, taxpayers should have the most economical protective systems. But as previously discussed, the Fire Departments staff and equipment had never reached full compliance with existing National standards, whether before or after the Overrides. There was no overstaffed Fire Department to be reined in. Also, as previously noted, the Town will need three fire stations, given scheduled expansions of housing, business, and laboratory stock. It is axiomatic that growth brings increases in risks.

The lack of public understanding of the role of the LFD had a clear impact on Department morale. As was the case with the LPD, employment instability is stressful, especially when people put their lives on the line for the public. LFD's new leadership

and the budget restorations had a positive impact on morale. However, Town leadership recognition of the value and true needs of its Fire Department would have a positive impact on employee perceptions and boost morale, as no other action could.

Sending Multiple Equipment to a Medical Call: Luxury or Necessity?

The LFD sends a fire engine and an ambulance to every medical emergency call. Some residents, observing this deployment, interpreted this practice as evidence of overstaffing and needless redundancy. The Committee investigated the issue and found the following:

- All emergency calls are triaged by Dispatch which determines, within existing guidelines, whether an Advanced Life Support or a Basic Life Support response is required. (See previous discussion of ALS and BLS).
- ALS services (began April 19th, 2004), require paramedics to carry extensive equipment, including cardiac monitors and defibrillators, a drug box, oxygen, and a “first-in-bag” consisting of a large trauma kit. Paramedics must also return the equipment. Fire engines carry items the ambulance cannot accommodate.
- At the scene of the emergency, one paramedic communicates with the patient. The second paramedic obtains vital signs, including blood pressure, cardiac monitoring, connects 12 leads of the electrocardiogram machine (EKG) to the patient, and test blood sugar, among other things. The fire company officer obtains the patient’s history from his/her family. Another member of the fire company brings in the requirement transport appliance, stair chair, or stretcher.
- The presence of the fire company reduces the need for multiple trips to and from the scene of the emergency, facilitates a uniform flow of patient care, and enables both vehicles to return quicker to be available for new calls.
- Many patients require more than one person in attendance. Multiple ‘hands’ facilitate the safe removal of the patient from the site. They also help reduce work related back injuries of personnel. Many times, impediments (snow, furniture) need to be removed to facilitate evacuation.
- Cardiac patients and those requiring cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) require one person to administer chest compression, one person to ventilate the patient, and an additional person to drive the ambulance to the hospital. If resuscitation is not begun in less than six minutes, there is no hope for survival.
- Severe accidents must be tended to by many persons and equipment, especially if a “Med-Flight” evacuation is not possible.

A final point in this discussion goes to the heart of what should be an appropriate role for public safety (Dispatch, Police, Fire Department) in a community. *Unlike other public services that may be justifiably “demand driven,” a well functioning public safety system must be ready for the unexpected.* It must be prepared for major incidents (e. g., multiple vehicle accidents, serious injuries and death), and the handling of simultaneous emergencies. Such an event could easily require all the resources Lexington has, and may need mutual aid as well.

Practical effects of the 2004 LFD Budget Cuts

Closing the East Lexington Fire Station was divisive for the Town, pitting the residents of one geographic section against another. The action also failed to consider a number of important issues:

- After the failed Override, calls for assistance were handled by staff and equipment from LFD’s Headquarters. As a result, emergency response times nearly doubled, depending on the circumstances. For example, depending on a particular address (for example East Lexington), the arrival of the fire apparatus was delayed. With the backup ambulance no longer available, injured residents had to wait longer for ambulance assistance.^{xv} In an analysis of actual response times from July 1, 2003 to July 21st, 2003, response times increased from a normal average of 2.7 minutes (with a range of 1 to 4 minutes), to an average of 7.5 minutes, with a range of 4 to 12 minutes).⁶² As previously discussed, these delays exceeded national standards and constituted serious risks to the community.
- Unattended fires double in size within one minute. Just because Lexington has not had a conflagration as recently occurred in Rhode Island, does not mean that something similar could not happen here.
- The lack of a second fire engine and inadequate water supply resulted in an East Lexington home burning to the ground and extensive fire exposure damage to neighboring houses. (Date of Fire: August 23, 2003).⁶³
- The failed 2003 Override changed the way firefighters responded to emergencies. In essence, they followed more strictly the existing standards, in order to assure the life and survival of its personnel. As a result, the efficiency for fighting fires declined and property losses increased. For example, houses located adjacent to a fire were at increased risk of sustaining fire damage because the Department’s limited resources could only focus on the fire site. Obviously, the LFD could no longer follow the strategy recommended by NFPA 1710: “early,

⁶² Source: LFD. Fire Department Incident Impact Report, July 1, 2003 to July 21, 2003.

⁶³ Past and present Fire Chiefs do not think a second engine would have made an impact on the house that burned down, but the exposure damage to adjacent buildings would have been much less. (LFD: 8/31/04).

aggressive, and offensive primary interior attacks on a working fire are usually the most effective strategy to reduce loss of lives and property damage.”

- The cost savings were, in part, an illusion. When *insurance companies compute their premiums* for residential fire coverage, they include a *home’s distance to the fire station* in their calculations. Any changes that increase risk will eventually be reflected in the home owner’s insurance premium.
- If the 2003 failed Override cuts had not been redressed by the Town, the Insurance Services Office Inc.’s rating of the Fire Department would have increased, raising the Town’s and eventually each resident’s insurance rates.⁶⁴ ISO ratings are based on staffing, response times, age of equipment, etc. The organization uses a scale of one to six, with 1 being optimal. Ratings occur every six to ten years. Before the failed Override, Lexington was given a *rating of three*, yet another bit of evidence that the LFD was not the well-off Department some residents thought it to be. Had the ISO rated the LFD after the failed Override, its ratings would have increased to four or five.⁶⁵
- Inspectional services and preventive services were severely reduced, and some services were cut completely.

Aging Buildings and Equipment

The LFD Headquarters is an old and deteriorating building. Of particular concern is a continuing leakage from the adjacent Shell Oil Gas Station into the LFD basement. The Committee observed considerable amounts of mold/fungi around pumps and other equipment. Located across from that contaminated site is the physical fitness with weight lifting equipment and treadmills. While there are air filter installed in the ceiling, the situation is egregious. Mold is a recognized, serious contaminant that endangers the health and wellbeing of anyone in contact with it. Excellent physical fitness is a job related requirement for firefighters. No Lexington resident or employee of the Town should be in danger of exposure to this substance. At the recent Town Meeting, the Capital Committee, reviewing the Town’s capital assets and identifying building problems, never mentioned the Fire (or Police) Department building. Committee discussion created the impression that Fire Department personnel *appear* to have a high incidence of cancer.⁶⁶ This issue should be followed up. Given the clear existence of mold so close to the physical fitness room, *the Committee strongly recommends that this situation be remedied as the earliest possible moment.*

⁶⁴ The Insurance Services Office (ISO), located in New York City, regularly reviews public fire suppression facilities and develops public protection classifications for fire insurance ratings purposes.

⁶⁵ Source: Chief William Middlemiss, February 5th, 2004.

⁶⁶ The Committee did not collect any data on this issue.

As is the case with Police Cruisers and Equipment, LFD's fire engines, ladder truck, and ambulances are aging. ISO ratings are based on the quality, age, and condition of the equipment. As previously discussed, the telecommunications system is outdated. In light of this finding, the Committee suggests that the previously recommended professional study (**Section I, 6**) include a comprehensive analysis of LFD equipment and communications needs.

Mutual Aid

Mutual aid is a system in which fire departments in a cluster of neighboring communities agree to respond to medical and fire incidents on an as needed basis. Mutual aid is coordinated by Metrofire. It covers 34 communities in metropolitan Boston. *Mutual aid is only supposed to be used for bone fide emergency situations*, not for non-emergency duties. In 2003 and 2004, Lexington has received emergency assistance from Arlington, Bedford, Belmont, Burlington, Hanscom Air Force Base, Lincoln, Waltham, Winchester, and Woburn. Had there been a major emergency in Boston due to the recent Democratic National Convention, the LFD would have been called upon to render assistance.

Before the failed 2003 Override, the LFD provided its share of assistance to neighbor communities. With the failed Override, the picture changed dramatically. **Chart 15, Mutual Aid into Lexington, FY 03 – FY 04** shows mutual aid received by Lexington from its neighbors between July 1st 2002, and March 22nd, 2003. During that timeframe, Lexington received emergency assistance from its neighbors 155 times. By contrast, between July 1st, 2003 and March 22nd, 2004, Lexington received mutual aid 394 times! Of these, Arlington responded 12 times, Bedford 145 times, Belmont 37 times, Burlington, 36 times, Hanscom Air Force Base, 46 times, Lincoln 23 times, Waltham 52 times, Winchester 22 times, and Woburn 21 times. In the words of The Belmont Citizen Herald, "mutual aid is not so mutual."⁶⁷ **Chart 16, Percentage Change in Mutual Aid into Lexington, FY 03 – FY 04** demonstrates graphically the asymmetry of mutual aid brought on by the failed Override.

The important issue about mutual aid is that it is based on the principle of *quid pro quo*. Neighbor communities may, at some point, refuse to participate in such an uneven arrangement. For example, Saugus has recently gone on record of not being able to respond to requests for mutual aid because of scarce resources. Others may follow. In a recent interview, Belmont Fire Chief William Osterhaus stated pointedly: "I don't know when Lexington is going to fund the services they need, but they're really abusing the mutual aid system drastically, both for ambulance and for fire calls."⁶⁸ The same Belmont Citizen Herald article quotes Bedford Fire Chief Kevin McCaffrie as saying that Lexington had put a strain on his department (and others) by reducing his town's resources. For example, since Bedford has only one ambulance, the town was forced to call for mutual aid for Bedford because its ambulance was busy responding to emergencies in Lexington.

⁶⁷ LFD statistics, August 2004. See also **Belmont Citizen Herald**. April 26, 2004.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

Brief Analysis of the Fire Department Questionnaire

The Committee developed and administered a comprehensive questionnaire for the LFD (**Appendix D**). Respondents were guaranteed absolute anonymity. A total of 52 questionnaires were distributed. Of these, 30 questionnaires were returned, reflecting a 58% return rate. **Appendix B** presents a compilation of the responses. The Committee encourages the reader to examine this Appendix to obtain the full flavor of problems, issues, and respondent perceptions. The following is a brief analysis highlighting key points made by the respondents.

- Over two-thirds of the respondents indicate that they were not involved in the planning for the personnel changes before and after the failed Override. (Note: this was before the new Fire Chief took command).
- *23% of the respondents reported very low morale before the failed Override. After the failed Override, that number jumped to 93%.*
- Factors having the highest impact on LFD morale were the Town Manager and Selectmen, 70%, Town Meeting and the Voters, 60%, and Department Management, 60%.
- Respondents thought that the Department's captains and lieutenants are doing an excellent job in spite of great difficulties.
- Labor relations seem to be on an even keel (as is the case for the LPD).
- Many respondents identified the daily work environment as a major factor impacting morale. Other factors listed include an unstable work environment, lack of supplies, the sick building, and a public that does not see the frustration, disappointment, and poor morale.
- There is a major safety risk when the Fire Station is left unattended and anyone can walk around (in cases when all personnel are responding to an emergency).
- *A strong majority of firefighter respondents derive their greatest satisfaction from serving the public.*
- Before the failed Override, one third of respondents thought that training was not adequate. *After the failed Override, 87% thought that training was not adequate.* Respondents identified many training needs ranging from mass casualty incident training, counterterrorism, to continuing education.
- Inadequate technology and lack of equipment quality are serious issues for the LFD. 54% of the respondents described these issues as "low" and "very low" before the failed Override. This percentage increased to 83% after the failed Override. Factors include aging equipment, scores of computer related problems, malfunctioning communications and dispatch incident management software, and inadequate training, among many other issues.
- The loss of the administrative assistant brought many problems, ranging from poor customer service, unanswered telephones, to loss of training time.
- *Staff reductions due to the failed Override seriously impacted 97% of the respondents.* Many cited increased risks to the public and to firefighters.

Medical assist delays, reduced firefighting efficiency, and changing firefighting modes were identified and deplored.

- *The loss of the East Lexington Fire Station seriously affected 97% of the respondents. The closing eliminated the backup water supply and made things more dangerous for the public and the personnel.*
- *97% of the respondents were seriously affected by the loss of the 2nd engine company. Many cited increased safety risks, delayed water supply, and changes from offensive to defensive tactics as factors.*
- *A majority of respondents thought that the failed Override seriously affected their ability to conduct quarterly inspections and reduced their familiarity with buildings and restaurants.*
- *There was high agreement on the importance of the Fire Chief, Assistant Fire Chief and Administrative Assistance.*
- *Most respondents thought that the Department's level of service was very high before the failed Override. That percentage changed significantly after the failed Override. Answers included: "We still give 100% to all, no matter what," and were worried about greater risks of injury and death to firefighters as well as about poorer medical outcomes.*
- *Prior to the failed Override, a majority of respondents (53%) felt that staffing levels were adequate to provide a safe environment for their work. After the failed Override, 97% felt that was no longer the case. Responses identified a "constant juggling" of public and firefighter safety, insufficient staffing levels to meet standards or handle serious incidents, overtaxed equipment, no more aggressive firefighting...all in the face of increased emergency call volume.*
- *100% of the respondents thought that staffing levels after the failed Override no longer provided citizens with a safe level of protection. Respondents were concerned about many issues: response delays, insufficient staffing for providing accepted practice fire suppression, inability to handle multiple calls, unreasonable waits for out of Town ambulances, prolonged time to reach East Lexington, running 'ragged' to cover the whole Town with just one engine and one ladder.*
- *83% of the respondents think that the 2003/2004 Town budget sessions neither reflected the true needs of the Department, nor the safety of fire personnel or the public. Respondents did not want to be used as a "carrot or bait" to persuade the public to vote for the Override. They also did not think that public safety should be put on a "bundled" override.*
- *83% of the respondents think that public safety was not given the priority it needed throughout the 2004 budget process. The respondents had great difficulty understanding that other issues, such as recreation, took priority over public safety. Lack of public understanding and lack of Town leadership on public safety needs are issues of concern. The losses due to the Camden Road fire (August 23, 2003) would not have been as high as they were, if the East Lexington Fire Station had been open.*
- *The respondents make many good suggestions on how public safety could be enhanced in Lexington. They also provide vivid descriptions of the needs of Dispatch, which parallel the Committee's findings on that subject.*

Asked to “think outside the box,” respondents provide many constructive suggestions on how work activities and manpower redeployment could be undertaken to reduce public safety costs. Among these is the observation that *slightly increased staffing (about 55 to 60) would greatly eliminate overtime cost*. If the building were repaired, oil and gas costs could be cut. Fixing the “sick” fire building could reduce future health-related costs. Improved training, replacing aging fire apparatus, and communications equipment would raise efficiency and effectiveness.

In closing, the Committee expresses its appreciation to the BOS for providing it with an opportunity for input into its future deliberations on public safety. It also wishes to thank Chief Middlemiss and Chief Casey for the use of their facilities for Committee meetings and untold tangible assistance and information.

i O. W. Wilson and Roy C. McLaren. **Police Administration**. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1972. See also National Advisory Commission on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals, **Police**. U.S. Government Printing Office, 1973

ii Linton C. Freeman and Robert F. Winch, "Societal Complexity: An Empirical Test of a Typology of Societies," **American Journal of Sociology**, **LXII**, (March, 1957).

iii A good discussion of these issues can be found in: Jerome B. McKinney and Lawrence C. Howard. **Public Administration: Balancing Power and Accountability**. Oak Park, Illinois: Moore Publishing Co. 1979.

iv Victor H. Sims. **Small Town and Rural Police**. Springfield IL: Charles C. Thomas, Publishers, 1988; Dorothy Guyot. **Policing As Though People Matter**. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1991.

v Criminal Justice Research has identified multiple problems with the **Uniform Crime Reports**. First, **UCR** are collected by individual police departments and reported to the FBI on a voluntary basis. There are serious differences among department in definitions of crime. The data are also subject to "fudging," depending on the political needs of the reporting jurisdictions. For examples, research has documented that at times mayors and town leaders have deliberately decreased crime rates to show efficient management and improvements in the quality of life. Further, the **UCR** report only on seven "Index" crimes: murder and non-negligent manslaughter, forcible rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, larceny-theft, and motor vehicle theft. There is limited reporting on arson and hate crimes and no reporting on the nation's largest criminal activity, white collar crime. For example, there is no reporting on identify theft and computer crime, two of the fastest growing crime categories in the nation.

vi As a court certified expert in criminal justice, the Chair has presented evidence in several court cases that checking every fifteen minutes is too long a time interval to assure the safety of detainees. This is because suicide can be and has been accomplished in less than seven minutes.

vii The Chair has studied the issue of Desk/Dispatch officers extensively for the Middlesex County Sheriff's Department.

viii Among the latest, no doubt, well intended proposals on the e-mail circuit is for the LPD to adopt a **Comstat system**. Comstat refers to a "strategic control system," designed to collect and disseminate a jurisdiction's crime problems and to track efforts to deal with them. Unfortunately, this suggestion is not grounded in the realities of the LPD. Comstat requires a data-saturated environment, sophisticated computers and software, at least bi-weekly meetings, and hour-by-hour analyses of "crime spikes," to name a few of its characteristics. It should be clear that the LPD, with a current total of 47 Sworn Officers, totally **lacks the resources and organizational complexity to implement a Comstat System**. David Weisburd et al, "The Growth of Comstat in American Policing," 2001. The Police Foundation, Washington, D.C.

ix The great Robert K. Merton noted that **each action has intended and unintended consequences**. Both need to be considered when policy decisions are made and public action is taken. Robert K. Merton. 1957. **Social Theory and Social Structure**. New York: Collier-McMillan Ltd.

x It is now documented that some of the deaths of 343 firefighters could have been prevented on September 11th, 2001 in New York City. Police helicopters above the World Trade Center radioed their concern about the stability of the Twin Towers 21 minutes before the South Tower fell. Hundreds of firefighters did not receive the warning because they were using a different radio system. Also, in Littleton, Colorado, police, fire and medical units rushing to the scene of the Columbine High School shooting were unable to communicate because of a tangle of different radios on different channels.

xi **Basic level EMTs (BLS)** are capable of treating various medical emergencies before a patient reaches the hospital. Their work includes wound care, oxygen administration, cervical spine immobilization, cardiopulmonary resuscitation, and the ability to recognize many life threatening emergencies. **Advanced Life Support (ALS) EMTs** are trained to provide additional life saving procedures: the use of a semi-automatic external defibrillator (SAED), and the administration of a preset amount of epinephrine to a victim of anaphylactic shock. Anaphylaxis is an acute, often explosive, systemic reaction that occurs in a previously sensitized person who again receives the sensitizing agent (e.g. bee stings, peanuts, etc). Symptoms develop between **on1y to 15 minutes**. There is difficulty breathing due to laryngeal edema or bronchospasm. The **manifestations of shock can develop within another 1 to 2 minutes**. The affected

person may become convulsive, unresponsive and **may die**. Primary cardiovascular collapse can occur. Reactions range from mild to severe. Immediate treatment with epinephrine is imperative (**The Merck Manual, 16th Ed.**, Rahway, NJ: Merck Research Laboratories).

^{xii} NFPA 1710 4.1.2.1.1 states: “the fire department shall establish the following time objectives: (1) one minute (60 seconds) for turnout time; (2) Four minutes (240 seconds) or less for the arrival of the first arriving engine company at a fire suppression incident and/or 8 minutes (480) seconds or less for the deployment of a full first alarm assignment at a fire suppression incident; (3) Four minutes (240 seconds) or less for the arrival of a unit with first responder or higher level capability at an emergency medical incident; (4) Eight minutes (480 seconds) or less for the arrival of an advanced life support unit at an emergency medical incident, where this service is provided by the fire department. NFPA 1710 5.2.3.1.1 states: “The fire department’s fire suppression resources shall be deployed to provide for the arrival of an engine company within a 4-minute response time and/or the initial full alarm assignment within an 8-minute response time to 90 percent of the incidents”, and NFPA 1710 5.2.3.2.1 states: “The fire department shall have the capability to deploy an initial full alarm assignment within an 8-minute response time to 90 percent of the incidents...” The 2 In/Out standard requires that anytime two firefighters are inside a burning building, two firefighters must be on the outside at all times.

^{xiii} The LFD uses approximately 1,300 hours overtime (OT) per month or 15,600 hours per year. Using the rate of \$34.50 per hour requires \$538,200 OT per year. Given that the current 2005 budget has \$439,383 available, there is a shortfall of \$98,817. But this amount does not take into consideration callbacks, training, Fire Academy costs for training new employees, mandatory paramedic training, and reserve funds for storms and Town details.

^{xiv} When the 2004 Override was reaching a fever pitch, the Chief, with no clerk to file or keep statistics, was asked by a resident who walked into the Fire Station, to furnish statistics on the basis of which a warrant could be written for Town Meeting, to keep the East Lexington Fire Station closed.

^{xv} In the fall of 2003, a pedestrian hit my a motor vehicle lay helpless and bleeding on Bedford Street for 16 minutes for an ALS ambulance to respond from Woburn.